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Journal of the Society of Arts.

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1856.

THIRTEENTH ORDINARY MEETING.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12th, 1856.

The Thirteenth Ordinary Meeting of the One Hundred and Second Session was held on Wednesday, the 12th inst., Henry Cole, Esq., C.B., Vice-President, in the chair.

The following Candidates were balloted for and duly elected Ordinary Members :—

Babb, George.	Parkes, Samuel Hickling.
Crossley, Frank, M.P.	Schuster, Leo.
Fauntleroy, Charles.	Scott, James.
Holmes, James.	Stainton, Henry Tibbats.
Lewis, Arthur J.	Thomas, John Evan, F.S.A.
May, Samuel.	Watson, Charles.

The following Institution has been taken into Union since the last announcement :—

411. London, Royal Polytechnic Institution, Regent-street.

On the table were exhibited—

Three volumes prepared for the Paris Exhibition, with a view to represent the state of the manufacture of paper in all its branches in Great Britain. The specimens in Vol. I. were all manufactured at the Mills of Mr. T. H. Saunders, of Dartford, and are divided into three classes :—

Class A.—Hand-made account book, drawing, and writing papers.

Class B.—Machine-made account-book, drawing, writing, and printing papers.

Class C.—Special papers; plain and elaborately water-marked; adapted for bank-notes, cheques, scrip, shares, and similar documents.

Vol. 2. Class D.—Comprises specimens of paper which may be considered the raw materials of other manufactures, or require some further operation before consumption.

Vol. 3. Class E.—This volume contains samples of all the various packing and wrapping papers.

In the first volume are inserted a short historical notice of the manufacture, and a description of the processes and machinery employed, illustrated by two large plates, one of the hand, the other of the machine, process. The design of the border, printed in gold, is composed of plants, as the cotton, flax, hemp, papyrus, and palm, from the fibres of which writing materials have been formed in different ages. These volumes have been presented to the Government for the use of the Department of Science and Art.

The paper read was

RECENT PROGRESS IN DESIGN, AS APPLIED TO MANUFACTURES.

By GEO. WALLIS, HEAD MASTER OF THE GOVERNMENT SCHOOL OF ART, BIRMINGHAM.

It cannot fail to be interesting, and may certainly be useful, to note from time to time the progress or otherwise which, as a nation, we may be making in any special phase of art or science. Merchants and manufacturers have their periodical stock-taking, by which they ascertain the precise position of their affairs, consign out-of-date

productions to the limbo of “job-lots,” clear their warehouses of goods which do not improve by keeping, and get rid of dead stock for the benefit of living capital. This is a wholesome process, which, judiciously applied, may have a healthy tendency on the action of other affairs beside those of commerce, and might be used much oftener than it is, to test gain or loss in matters of education, alike national and individual.

For some years past efforts have been made to impress the manufacturers of this country, as producers, and the people as consumers, with the value of art as applied to trade; and although the former generally repudiate all interference between them and their customers, yet it so happened that some 20 years ago the utter neglect of almost everything which tended to give refinement to the forms in which articles of every-day use were furnished to the public, attracted the attention of a few artistic and scientific busy-bodies, who could not understand why ugliness should be so much more economical than beauty, and who even had the hardihood to declare that the latter was as cheap as the former, and *much better!* Strange to say, recent experience has confirmed these people in the conviction thus expressed, and has even carried them further, for they now declare that beauty is much *cheaper* than ugliness, when the principles of art are understood and judiciously applied. It is scarcely to be supposed, however, that everybody is as yet convinced even of the truth of the theory that beauty is as cheap as ugliness; but we certainly have progressed to the point at which art, as applied to manufactures, is really thought to be worth something, since in nearly all manufacturing pursuits into which decoration enters as an element, there has been an attempt, more or less successful, to improve upon past forms and embellishments. It has been found, too, that the markets have not stagnated because goods were a little prettier than formerly, and it has even been hinted at, though this is looked upon with suspicion as a dangerous commercial heresy, that public instruction in art, by means of lectures, schools of art, art publications, and the free access to galleries of works of art, has had something to do with this change, which it is now confessed has come over the spirit of the home market, in relation to the ornamentation of articles of every-day demand.

During the initiation of this change, those engaged in urging it forward have generally found two very opposite influences at work, each tending to counteract a really healthy development of the art-power of the country. One of these influences came out of the determined enunciation by the ultra-practical manufacturer, of the dogma, that all art, as applied to trade, was useless, unless it could be proved that it would “sell,” whilst at the same time the proof by trial was refused. The other opposing influence was to be found in the apathy or antagonism of those who, looking upon art as little better than an elegant abstraction, intended only for the use of the wealthy and the wise, denounced all application of its principles to the utilities of life or to the purposes of trade and commerce as an unrighteous attempt to vulgarise it. By the manufacturer popular art was considered as an impertinence, by the connoisseur *par excellence*, it was regarded as a profanation.

It was thus between these two horns of a dilemma that the advocates of art-education had to steer at the outset. It is all tolerably plain sailing now, since fashion has rendered the constant movement of the producer a necessary part of his existence; but it was not always so, and reminiscences of wrathful manufacturers, and still more angry shopkeepers, whose customers had dared to have an opinion of their own, even though obtained at second-hand, will, at times, present themselves. Thus one has sometimes been compelled to listen to a statement how two customers, who had attended a lecture on art the night before, had impudently dared to call the last new design for a chandelier, “a brass gooseberry bush turned upside down;” and worse still, one has been compelled to father and defend the principle of the criticism, and declare

that the said chandelier *was* more like an inverted gooseberry bush than anything else in creation. Then the complaint that, "Really the women were getting so particular about the dress patterns," that in spite of the last *new de laine*, printed in 400 colours by the agency of an unlimited number of blocks or cylinders, they could not be induced to buy, since they had got a notion from some pragmatical art-critic, that a lady's dress looked none the better for reminding the beholder of *fourteen yards* of rainbow done in wool!

Happily these small miseries, arising out of the action of a spirit of innovation upon the established interests and vested rights of the British public in ugliness, are rapidly vanishing, and it would be at once ungenerous, as it would be unwise, to expect the manufacturer to make, or the shopkeeper to keep for sale, goods which the public are not sufficiently educated in art to appreciate. Our complaint rather refers to the pertinacity with which too many set themselves up as arbitrators for the public, and decide what it shall *buy*, inasmuch as they will not make or keep anything except what they consider good to *sell*. Their standard being frequently very much lower than that of their customers; hence the constant complaints of the latter. This is, in itself, some evidence that the consumers have a perception of an abstract excellence beyond the reality submitted to them, and this fact has had much to do with that recent progress in design which it is intended to specifically indicate under various industrial heads in this paper.

All are tolerably well agreed that some progress has been made, especially within the last three or four years, although there is no doubt a considerable difference of opinion as to the real character and value of that progress. Many persons, looking from the manufacturer's point of view, will ask, "Do the articles in which improvement is most manifest *sell* better?" Viewed as seen by the merchant and shopkeeper, the question will probably be as to increased profit, whilst from the ultra-artistic point of view, it is more than probable that it will be disputatiously declared that the movement made is no improvement, because it is not in precise conformity to some abstract principle in which the question of realization by an economic process is considered as altogether a secondary matter, or, it may be superciliously maintained that English design means absence of all true art, and that the less we trouble ourselves about the matter the better, since they manage these things more wisely in France! Again, the lover of antiquity, who affects ancient types and methods, and believes that all the labour-saving inventions of modern times are so many mechanical abominations, to be repudiated by all earnest and true spirited art-workers, forgets altogether that the question of mechanical power is only one of degree, since the hammer, the file, and the chasing tool are mechanical contrivances for facilitating labour which could not be executed so well or so speedily by more primitive means.

The secret of all this horror of stamping, electro-depositing, printing, power-loom weaving, and so forth, lies, it is to be feared, in the fact that the almost exclusive possession of a work becomes impossible. Duplication spoils that flattering union which your pure and legitimate connoisseur lays to his soul as to the uniqueness of his treasure. The beauty of a fine work may be a joy to others as well as himself, therefore he loaths the vile, short, cheap, and ready processes by which this is effected. But then it is argued there is such a sameness in these mechanical reproductions, the charm of variety is wanting, and a sensation of commonness takes the place of that of rarity, and this everlasting repetition of the same form is a traitorous use of art. As if, because green peas are so much alike, a love of *petit pois* is treason to good eating; or because the individual sheep of a flock so strongly resemble each other, there is to be an universal repudiation of mutton.

If modern art, whether applied to industry or the higher illustrations of the power of the beautiful, is ever to make

a distinct place for itself in the coming time, it will be out of the wise and perfect use of those mechanical means and appliances with which an All-wise Providence has seen fit to furnish mankind for their use in this age; and it is fearlessly asserted, that he is a negligent worker in the present, and a betrayer of the interests of the future, who does not avail himself of every means which modern invention and discovery affords him to reproduce, in suitable form and material, such beautiful objects of art-manufacture as shall tend to the refinement and instruction of his fellow-men. Nay, more; if he loves the past and those earnest workers of the olden time whose examples he quotes, let him be told that had they had the means at their disposal for shortening their labour, extending its sphere of action, and enabling them to do the work of two, ten, perchance twenty lives in one, he pays but a poor compliment to their earnestness and their love of art, to tell us that they would not have availed themselves of them. They did their work in their way, and that, too, the best which their age and opportunities afforded them, and we certainly follow in their spirit much more by doing our work in and for our own time and wants, and consequently in our own way; thus doing as they did, using all the means afforded us, and not going back to obsolete methods, and tying ourselves down to processes which, though the best when they were used, are no longer *the best*.

All this has been said in order at once to repudiate all test of recent progress by methods rather than by results. It is the complete fact in the work itself with which we have to deal, not whether a man potters for a month over a piece of work with a hammer and chisel, or struck it out at a blow with a die and press, cast it in a mould, or deposited by voltaic action. Nor, on the other hand, can the most beautiful scientific or mechanical process be admitted into the consideration of the merits of the result obtained thereby, certainly not as any excuse for defects.

It is proposed, for convenience and brevity, to divide the subject under consideration into four special sections, with a fifth, which may be termed supplementary. These may be stated under the heads of design as applied to Textile, Fictile, Vitreous, Metallic, and Miscellaneous manufactures. This classification, if not scientifically correct, yet in such a summary as this paper is necessarily confined to, gives the advantage of breadth of view and ease of reference.

Commencing with

TEXTILE MANUFACTURES

the first point to consider is the recent tendency of public taste, indicative of the nature of the demand which the manufacturer has been called upon to supply. In dress goods, this tendency has been most decidedly towards plain-dyed or self-coloured goods, or such as presented comparatively little variation from the effects producible by shades of a single colour; and, although in the majority of instances it is feared that the character of the ornamentation has been generally such as could not be called either artistic in design or treatment, yet it is something to have arrived at a point at which great contrasts in colour are rather the exception than the rule. The best class of Yorkshire wool and mixed fabrics present features in design which contrast favourably with goods of a similar class manufactured five or six years ago.

In calico prints, except of the highest and best class, or of the very simplest and plainest madders, the change appears rather for the worse than otherwise; yet good authorities in the Midland Counties, at least, say that the great mass of the people who usually buy these things prefer the smaller, neater, and more simply coloured designs, to the blotchy abominations which used formerly to be sought after, and which, in too many instances, are still presumed, by the less observant manufacturer and retailer, to constitute the taste of the working classes. Taking Birmingham as an example, it may be stated,

without hesitation, that the neater and more elegant designs in cheap calicoes are most in demand. Taking the opinion of one of the best authorities on this subject in Europe, given the other day at Manchester, it would appear that whilst the printer and engraver are both anxious to do better things, they are persecuted into the production of uglinesses of such a character, that the workmen who have to engrave the cylinders look upon them with disgust, and often declare, in language more expressive than polite, on beginning a new pattern, that, "If the fools had tried to produce an uglier thing, they could not have done it." In short, design, as applied to a large portion of the British calico print trade, just now appears to be literally "a thing of shreds and patches"—mixtures from old pattern books, heterogeneously hurled together at hap-hazard, without regard to purpose, unity of effect, or any other constituent of an artistic design. As a matter of course, the houses with established reputations for the production of the better class of patterns, which come out in neat, simple, and perfectly textile effects, producible in madders—pink, lavender, and chocolate, or in half-mourning prints, keep their ground, and their customers, and "pooh pooh" artistic design as a useless thing to the nation, except so far as it cultivates the general taste of the people to the full appreciation of the simple ornamentation which they have the good sense to employ. To educate the consumer up to this point, is a laudable thing; but to urge the producer to aim beyond these is commercial treason; as if we, as a manufacturing nation, are not more employed in production than consumption; whilst in our home trade the producer of one article is the consumer of another, and it is more than probable that the exact standard of taste to which the producer manufactures is that to which he will appeal as a buyer.

In silks there is a decided progress in design, as applied to some classes of goods, and these, too, of the cheaper kind, and, consequently, most in demand. The Spitalfields productions exhibited at Paris gave evidence of this, and, although Macclesfield was not adequately represented in the Universal Exposition of 1855, a recent visit to the manufactories of that town has proved in a most satisfactory manner that a quiet but steady progress has characterised the designs brought out at Macclesfield during the past three or four years. The ultra-imitation of natural objects is gradually giving way to more severe ornamental forms, which, if not always of the true textile type, are yet geometric in character and precise in form. Two or three specimens of the successful application of the most tasteful of these in neckerchiefs are now exhibited, and there is little doubt of their being highly successful in the market. It has been thought worth while, too, to select one as an example of the influence which the Macclesfield School of Art is exercising. The designer of this, in the employ of one of the largest houses, formerly dealt largely in peacocks, cottages, butterflies, and other equally absurd subjects, as decorations suited to the angles of a lady's neckerchief. They have given way under the teaching of the school, in this instance at least, to floral arrangements upon a geometric basis, of which the specimen produced will give a fair idea. Formerly the Macclesfield silks were more noticeable for the gaiety and contrast than for the taste or their colouring. Checks and stripes are, undoubtedly, a severe test of the power of the manufacturer to combine tints judiciously; and the mania for introducing these in great variety often led and still leads to strange effects. At present there is a decided preference for two, or at most three, tints; and even in the combination of more than these, failure seems to arise more from an uncertainty as to the proportional quantity of each, than in the tints or colours brought together. This is a great step, inasmuch as the question of quantity is simply a question of numbers when properly studied and rightly applied.

In furniture silks the designs of the last three or four years appear to have been based upon much sounder prin-

ciples than formerly. Geometric forms, and the severer elements of the generic styles of ornament, have been introduced, not only with success, as regards the artistic result, but also as regards their sale. In fact, as a whole, there are few departments of industry into which design enters as an element in which there has been a greater change than in the various textile fabrics used by upholsterers. Without asserting that this change is universal, for it is not, it may be safely stated that successful efforts have been made to introduce a more suitable style of decoration; and designs which five or six years ago would have been pronounced too architectural and stiff, are now not only manufactured, but sold in great quantities. In curtains and table-covers, for instance, either plain surfaces, with borders of an elegant character, as compared with those in vogue eight or ten years ago, are preferred to the "all over" patterns, which were pronounced as the only things which would ever sell in the English market. Where it is not desirable to have blank surfaces of colour, powderings in geometric, or, at least, severely symmetrical forms are frequently introduced, either by embroidery or by weaving. Nor is this tendency to the use of more tasteful drapery in furniture confined entirely to the costly productions. An eminent Manchester house has, in connection with their productions in silk and embroidery, introduced, with great success, printed borders for curtains, the majority of the designs for which are of a severe type in form and colour, chiefly frets and gulloches in one colour, or at most two. A few of these borderings have also been designed to meet the views of those who think that all severe ornament must be stiff in effect, and that no forms except flowers can be made satisfactory vehicles of a colour. This compromise between artistic principle and the supposed requirements of the market, is certainly not successful as regards the former, and it is to be hoped it will not be so as regards the latter, since manufacturers who really have the enterprise to introduce a good thing to the public, ought also to know that their best interest lies in keeping up the character of these productions alike in design and execution. In embroidery, the ultra-naturalesque forms which prevailed some six or seven years ago, are giving way to a class of design more suited to production by the needle. Much of this is doubtlessly to be attributed to the severe character of the ecclesiastical embroideries, for which there has more recently been so large a demand. In gymps and edgings, too, the character of a trimming has been gradually taking the place of the wiry and unmeaning nonsense which used formerly to be so difficult to put upon a fabric in a satisfactory manner, but which it was still more difficult to keep upon it.

In connection with silks and the question of edgings and trimmings, a few words may be said at once about ribbons. The French have had the credit of producing the most tasteful things in a certain class of silks, and French ribbons have always held a good position. In fact, those of English manufacture have always been looked upon as inferior, alike in make, colour, and design. Now a ribbon, if it is anything, is simply an accessory to something else in dress. It comes in as a rosette, a border, and, in special cases, in the character of a festoon. Floral design, where suitably arranged, is, after all, not so much out of place as some hyper-critics might suppose, since a wreath of flowers is not an unbecoming ornament to a lady's bonnet, cap, or hair. It is quite clear, however, that the best designed ribbon is that which carries out the idea of an ornamentally-arranged border, in which form and colour are so combined, as to give finish to that portion of the dress upon which it is used. Tested by this standard, what becomes of the supposed excellence in taste of French ribbons? And, however gay and often exquisite in point of colour, many of those exhibited at Paris in 1855 certainly were, a goodly number of those now produced at Coventry are superior articles in the principle of their ornamentation. There is one point, however, which must ever be borne in mind, with respect not only to French ribbons, but many other articles produced in France for

oreign markets, especially English and American, that a certain standard of ugliness in form, and violence of contrast in colour, producing vulgarity, is essential to suit the peculiar notions of the wholesale buyers, who act as the arbiters of taste for the British public and that of the United States. Whoever saw a Frenchwoman wearing these party-coloured trimmings? It is certainly no compliment to those who do wear them to be told that the people who make them know better than to wear them, but consider them good enough, artistically, for the barbarous taste of their customers.

In the important articles of linen damasks, whilst a few excellent things have been produced from time to time, by the leading manufacturers, it is feared that no great progress has been made towards a purer style of ornamenting an otherwise beautiful fabric, and that designs in which much excellent drawing is thrown away upon unsuitable subjects, are still produced, and that, too, as specimens of progress. It is, however, something to have got rid of an immense amount of unmeaning ornamentation, whilst specimens of diaper-work for centres, and of symmetrical, if not absolutely geometrical, arrangements in borders, have occasionally made their appearance, which cannot fail to produce a good effect, since they commend themselves by contrast with their more ambitious predecessors.

In cotton quiltings, too, diapered effects are taking the place of costly and ineffective arrangements of form, in which the character of the fabric and its purpose were sacrificed to the whim of a manufacturer, who first gets himself into a difficulty by aiming at the production of some elaborate absurdity, which is generally supposed to be an impossibility, and then finds himself in a still greater difficulty after he has achieved his object, on discovering that he has thrown away time and money upon a work which, from its inconsistency, those who do not understand it are careless about, and those who do understand it condemn. This was illustrated in a few strange things—such as views of the building in Hyde-park—exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851; and again in certain attempts at the production of historical subjects in lace exhibited in the Universal Exposition of 1855. The absurdity of this latter attempt was the more glaring from the fact that abundant evidence was afforded that in the lace trade of England, especially in the machine-laces of Nottingham, great progress had been made in design since the International Exhibition in Hyde-park. This was decidedly proved in the cheap curtains exhibited at Paris, in which a fitness of ornamentation was shown which cannot fail to largely influence design as applied to other departments of the lace trade.

In Irish laces and sewed muslins the progress in this respect has been of a marked and healthy character. Setting out from a point at which all needle-work types would appear to have been repudiated, this industry has gradually but surely progressed, so as to stand in such a position at the present time as to fairly challenge criticism in all the higher class of work; and it is probable that as much may be said of a considerable portion of the Honiton lace, as manufactured by and for the best houses. In short, in these, by no means unimportant departments of national industry, in which form in outline or in mass, or both in combination, is alone available, the three common-sense questions:—What is the material? What are the means? What is the use? appear to have had fair-play, and an attempt, at least, at honest solution.

These three questions, if applied to carpets, which must form the last point for consideration under the head of textiles, would, it is feared, receive but a very imperfect and unsatisfactory response. Yet some progress has been made even in carpet designs, which, a few years ago, appeared to be hopelessly abandoned to an incessant ringing of the changes upon artistic pit-falls, man-traps, and floral stumbling-blocks in velvet pile and terry fabrics in wool. A few manufacturers, as also a few dealers,

seem to have arrived at the point that, inasmuch as a carpet is a covering for a floor, it ought to look like a floor—that is, a surface to walk upon,—that a carpet is not the only article in a room, and that its lines and its colours ought rather to be subordinate to the more prominent pieces of furniture, than to challenge attention by the brilliancy of its hues in masses, or the tortuosity of its lines in the boundary of its forms. A conviction, too, has arisen that forms in projection are inconsistent with the position of the surface upon which they are represented; and that, even granting that flowers, tastefully, arranged and judiciously treated, are not unsuitable objects for the decoration of a carpet, yet there is no reason why the flower-basket should be represented too.

The statement that floral designs in carpets are still preferred by the consumers, and that the ladies especially, in spite of the best geometric designs, insist upon roses done in wool, is a fair argument enough in its commercial application, but in an artistic sense only proves that the people lack a knowledge of principles by which to test these things. The ladies still buy the Indian pine-pattern shawl, and will probably continue to do so, not from any conviction of its eminently textile character as a vehicle of colour, but simply from association of idea, just as the old willow-pattern plate was formerly, and still is, to a great extent, the only true and veritable representation of popular notions of fictile decoration. It will be thus seen that the admirers of floral design in carpets, and Indian pines in shawls, are at cross-purposes with themselves, so far as common sense is concerned. It is much easier, however, to say, "Out upon your common sense and art-tests too, so long as people buy!" than to prove that the advocates of the application of sound principles are wrong, even commercially, if care is taken to judiciously introduce a purer style of art, without a sudden repudiation of prevailing ideas.

Looking at the probabilities of future progress in textile design, the great stumbling-block appears to lie in the mania amongst large buyers, and even retailers, for concocting their own patterns—it would be a libel on all art to call it *designing*. But for this, the probabilities are strongly in favour of a more rapid improvement in the future, since manufacturers themselves are beginning to feel that a knowledge of drawing and the principles of design is of considerable use in the preparation of those patterns with which, if left uninfluenced, they would endeavour to supply the market. So long, however, as the mere agent between the manufacturer and the public is permitted to substitute the traditions of the market for the common-sense principles of art, and empirically dictate what the one shall *make* and the other shall *buy*, matters will go on much as they have done, except that it is just possible the taste of the dealer himself may improve, where it happens that he is not convinced that he is the embodiment of all-perfect wisdom in his own special trade.

FICTILE MANUFACTURES.

In no department of British industry has the value of a gradual introduction of improved modes of decoration been more clearly proved than in that of porcelain and ordinary earthenware. To any one who, like the writer of this paper, visited the Staffordshire Potteries nineteen years ago, and observed the state of things at that time, and has had the privilege of an occasional visit at stated intervals during the period which has intervened, it must be very obvious that a change, such as we frequently hear pronounced as impossible in other industries, has come over nearly the whole of the productions of that district. Far from resting satisfied, however, with even the present state of things, it is quite clear that every coming year will tend to still greater progress than that already realised, and that those who pertinaciously persist in the common fallacy that to do as they have done is all-sufficient, will be left behind in the race.

The illustration of the fictile manufactures of Staffordshire in the Paris Exhibition was of such a character as to prove most unmistakably that a great improvement had taken place since 1851; and, without being prepared to approve, on artistic grounds, of all that had been done, yet, with the experience of the past upon our memory, it would be unjust not to award the credit due to intelligent effort and steady enterprise. To two houses, those of Messrs. Minton and Co. and Messrs. Copeland, the credit of the earlier movements is due; but others have followed who applying a better style of art to less exceptional articles than those produced by these two firms, have certainly aided in no slight degree the more recent improvements; and it is quite evident that at the present time, whatever fault may still be found with the subjects employed for the purpose of decorating the cheaper ware, yet that the character of the art employed is much higher than formerly. In the blue transfer ware, for instance, there is a decided tendency to mosaic forms, less attempt at projection in light and shadow, and although the details are often more architectural than fictile, yet the result is felt to be more suited, alike to the use of the article, the surface decorated, and the method of ornamentation.

In these forms, too, one can trace the influence of the merest elementary outlines in use in our schools of art, of which that established in the Potteries eight years ago has been one of the most practically useful.

In the cheaper kinds of porcelain, neatness approaching severity is gradually taking the place of the blotchy floral designs which formerly disfigured forms which ought to have suggested more tasteful decorations. Nor have the forms themselves been neglected, since in many articles of every-day use, a purity of outline formerly unknown has taken the place of the eccentric convolutions which bid defiance to common sense and the ordinary rules of proportion.

Into the higher class of porcelain painting an artistic refinement has been introduced which contrasts in a remarkable manner with the hard, wiry, and laboured results of some twelve or fifteen years ago. One feels that the workman is more of an artist, and yet not the less of an artisan than formerly.

It may be reasonably asked, to what cause is this change to be attributed? and it may be replied that at one period matters were really so bad that a change was inevitable in order to retain the trade in the higher branches, and there can be no doubt that the efforts after improvement in this direction led to corresponding efforts in the production of less costly articles. The introduction of Parian, however, would appear to have given the first impulse towards a higher style of art. The enterprise which prompted the employment of artistic talent in the production of statuettes, either original or as reductions from celebrated works, modern and antique, was soon engaged in the improvement of analogous branches of fictile art. The key-note was struck in Parian, but the theme has been carried out step by step in other materials and modes of application, such as tiles, vases, garden decorations, and domestic services.

Recently the efforts to emulate the productions of Palissy, and rival the *Majolica* of the best periods, have been attended with so much success, that he must be a hyper-critic indeed who would not join in a congratulatory compliment to the skill which had solved the problem of modern progress in British fictile art, so successfully.

In thus endeavouring to do justice to the progress made in the Staffordshire potteries, the productions of Worcester must not be forgotten. In 1846, a first visit to this city showed the writer how much in arrears its porcelain manufacture then stood, even as compared with that of Staffordshire. Since that period a marked improvement has taken place, and "the faithful city" bids fair to resume its old position, and even excel it, in the manufacture of the higher class of porcelain. Here, again, the influence of reproductions in imitation of past

modes of decoration has had its influence, and the imitation of Etruscan methods in the manufactory of Messrs. Kerr and Binns, followed as this has been by the successful production of admirable specimens, which go far towards rivaling the best class of *Limoges* ware, cannot fail to influence other departments, and stimulate to corresponding improvements. Good work of any kind always has this healthy influence, that it renders the mind impatient of that which is less perfect, and thus imperceptibly necessitates progress. In this fact lies the value of bringing fine works of art of every kind before the people. The mind once imbued with a true sense of the beautiful, detects at a glance any anachronism in form or colour, although the "why and wherefore" of the defect may not be so readily discovered. This can alone come of sound education and a knowledge of principles.

Let it not be supposed, however, that all recent progress in fictile art is confined to reproductions and imitations of antique types or methods. During a visit, the other day, to the Staffordshire potteries, two new modes of decoration presented themselves. Of one of these, specimens are forthcoming. This consists of an inlaid coloured body upon Parian, and seems admirably calculated, from its conditions, to necessitate severity in ornamentation. The process has been so far worked out by Messrs. Rickuss and Toft, and is of an economical character. Of the other process, now in the course of development by Messrs. Pratt, no specimen has, unfortunately, being forwarded, owing, as it would appear, from the proprietors not being at present prepared to bring it before the public. Some admirable things, however, are in progress, and, judging from a complete specimen, the results appear likely to be of a very satisfactory character. The process consists of enamelling upon terra-cotta, the outline of the ornament being printed by transfer, and the colours afterwards put in with a brush.

Having thus briefly sketched the progress of design as applied to fictile manufacture, the next and somewhat analogous section of our subject presents itself,

VITREOUS MANUFACTURE.

It may, perhaps, be said that all progress in the manufacture of glass in England during the last 200 years has been recent, since our fiscal restrictions completely kept an important branch of industry aloof from any contact with modern science and art until within a comparatively short period. Good use, however, has been made of the interval, and except that in some departments there still exists an affection for weight of metal and deeply cut facets, rather than a desire to produce pure forms with appropriate ornamentation, the glass trade of Britain has made extraordinary progress in many points, and in none more than the production of a good character of cheap glass, in which, if there is no very remarkable development of beauty, there is certainly nothing very offensive as regards either form or decoration. There is one point, however, which nearly all modern glass manufacturers of every country appear to neglect, and this is the crystalline nature of the material, and the necessity for adapting the ornamentation so as to make the most of what may be termed its inherent beauty. This is frequently proved in the results obtained in "pressed" glass, in which the conditions of manufacture compel the manufacturer to study the material. The effects produced, though often crude, and, viewed from a merely mechanical point of view, unsatisfactory as regards finish, are yet so admirably adapted to the material as to commend themselves in spite of other drawbacks.

Perhaps the best illustration which could be given of the value of this adaptation of form and ornamentation to the character of the material, was to be found in the candelabrum exhibited by Messrs. Osler, of Birmingham, in the Paris Exhibition, which contrasted so favourably with works of a similar class exhibited on that occasion. In this work a thoroughly crystal type was followed throughout, by means of an arrangement of prisms and cutting

in facets. The contrast it thus presented to similar works contributed by the French was remarkable.

In these specimens, the usual compliment of scroll work, brackets, bosses, and imitations of acanthus foliage, were to be found; and their inconsistency became only the more apparent from comparison with the English candelabrum, in which these details were studiously avoided, whilst the result was far more brilliant and ornamental. In fact, the inappropriateness of architectural details, the value of which as ornaments consists in their outline, and the effects resulting from a play of light and shadow, being applied to; and in a material in which the effects are obtained mainly by light in transition, is at once obvious; if that very simple, but much neglected, question, as to the nature of the material to be used, is ever fairly asked and honestly answered.

In coloured glass there can be no doubt much improvement has been made of late years; and, without exactly maintaining that the Bohemian standard has been reached, it may safely be affirmed that where care has been taken not to attempt too much, some of the articles in coloured glass produced in Birmingham are of a very tasteful and pleasing character.

In stained glass for windows, the progress in England has been of a very remarkable kind. From an exceptional employment, the manufacture of decorated windows has become a general one; and although the best works yet produced have been either copies of old windows, or based upon ancient types, yet, as the beginning of a revived industry, there is more upon which to congratulate ourselves than to condemn. Those who are impatient of results, and see no reason why the oak cannot be grown as rapidly as the mushroom, will perhaps object to this. Let it be so. All really permanent results take time to develop themselves.

METALLIC MANUFACTURES.

In the wide and constantly extending field of the fancy metal trades of Great Britain, the opportunity for progress in design is so great, that, with much to regret and find fault with, there is also much which cannot fail to satisfy and encourage all who take an interest in the application of art to industry. Perhaps the greatest revolution in the higher departments of design, especially as applied to gold and silver, has arisen out of the great modern discovery in science of the deposition of metals by galvanic action. A few specimens of high class productions in electro-metallurgy, by Mr. Edmund Heely, of Birmingham, are now exhibited as illustrations of the value of this process in its applications to the reproduction of ancient and modern works in the precious metals and bronze. The opportunity thus afforded for copying or reproducing, at a comparatively reasonable cost, the fine works of past times, has tended to educate the taste of the people, and lift us to a higher plane of judgment in modern productions. Thus, the test by mere material value in bullion weight, which had usurped the place of the esthetic value conferred by art, has been gradually giving way, and the importance of the latter is gradually becoming more and more recognised. This is seen in the character of the works now usually produced for testimonial services and for racing prizes. It is useless to say that these are not always appropriate,—often, indeed, exceedingly inappropriate,—but as an evidence that a desire for something more than a given number of ounces of gold and silver is giving way to some consideration of the form in which the metal comes, they are proofs of progress.

Again, let any person whose recollections of the displays made by our gold and silver plate manufacturers date back some fifteen or twenty years, compare the character of the productions then exhibited in show-rooms with that of some of the leading houses now, and then consider the change. In the show-rooms of Messrs. Elkington, Mason, and Co., of Birmingham, there are at the present time ten times more works, in which appropriateness and

purity of design, in connection with excellence of art-workmanship, is displayed, than could have been produced, twenty years ago, by all the houses in England put together.

The progress made in the manufacture of church plate and general metal work for ecclesiastical purposes, as indeed in all matters connected with church ornaments, is well known to all who take an interest in the progress of the arts of design. The manufactories of Messrs. Hardman, of Birmingham, Skidmore, of Coventry, and others, have produced works from time to time, within the last few years, which would have done credit to any country and any age, if the fact is taken into account that the question of cost was a serious element in their manufacture. And here it may be permitted to say a word about the influence which one mind alone undoubtedly exercised, not only on the particular department of art to which he specially devoted his attention, but, indeed, upon all of a kindred character, in which other minds were engaged who could appreciate his arguments, and apply the principles he enunciated. For however much we may differ in many points from the late Mr. Pugin, as to his special views of the mission of art, and the application of modern scientific and mechanical means to the reproduction of works of excellence, his earnest and fearless denunciation of all “shams”—his exposure of false systems of ornamentation—his thoroughly zealous working out, “in season and out of season,” of his own views in his own way, must ever command the respect of every true and earnest lover of art, since it is to the influence of his example, in one direction, that we owe so much of the progress to be recorded in other departments of art-manufacture. It is therefore but an act of justice to his memory, which all who differed from him on special points, can at least afford to perform—to fairly and honestly acknowledge how much he did, in his comparatively limited time, for the domestic and manufacturing arts of his country, both directly and indirectly.

That an enormous amount of work is still thrown away upon, comparatively, very indifferent designs in gold and silver is quite true. That the human figure and animals are pressed into service, rightly or wrongly, and that these are often wonderful examples of the ignorance of their producers, is also true. That ornamental types, originally designed for any material but metal, are introduced without the slightest consideration as to fitness, is a fact which is patent to all who interest themselves in this question; yet, with all these drawbacks, and many more not so easy to enumerate, it is affirmed that much has been done during the past few years for design as applied to gold and silver plate and its imitations.

In brass and bronze work the same may be said; for, notwithstanding the ultra-naturalesque character of many productions still in the market, and likely still to “sell,” an approximation has been made towards a much purer style, and this, too, since the Great Exhibition of 1851. It must never be forgotten that much of the over-ornate tendency, so visible in the ornamental brass manufactures of Birmingham, arose from a slavish and unmeaning following of the French, especially after the Exposition of 1844. It is satisfactory to know, however, that the present tendency has not its origin in this direction, and that in the brass and bronze chandeliers, gas-brackets, and works of an analogous character, efforts are now being made, and some of them very successful ones too, to work out a more severe style of treatment as applied to those useful articles, and, whilst giving less weight of metal and more hand-work, to produce tasteful results by a little more brain work at the outset. In fact, manufacturers are beginning to acknowledge that artistic talent, carefully directed to practical ends, will *pay* when it secures simplicity and elegance in design. Nor is this applied so much to the costly articles as to those coming within the means of persons of moderate income. In short, the construction required by the use appears to be first considered in the specimens alluded to, and then the

ornamentation is carefully adapted to the embellishment of the necessitated form. This, we apprehend, is sound practice, based upon sound principles. Under any circumstances the results are satisfactory, so far as manufacture goes; and that the articles will make their way in the market in due time, it would be as unreasonable to doubt as it would be to doubt the influence of light upon darkness.

In iron castings, especially those suited to the furnishing of entrance-halls and garden decorations, to quote the display of the Coalbrookdale Company in the Paris Exhibition, will be quite sufficient as an indication of progress in this direction; for without absolutely declaring that everything manufactured by this firm is perfection, one cannot hesitate to acknowledge that the improvement, even since 1851, must be visible to the most careless observer.

In connection with this part of our subject, the remarkable strides in design, as applied to the Sheffield manufacture of stoves, grate fronts, &c., must be noticed. It will be remembered how thoroughly well Sheffield maintained its position in the Great Exhibition of 1851. Since that time great progress has been made, and although this was not illustrated to its full extent at Paris, it is not the less a fact. It is not the less gratifying, too, to know that here, at least, the influence of the instruction given in the School of Art has been acknowledged, and that those who availed themselves of its teachings have sought to do it honour.

Before quitting the section of metallic manufactures, let us seek to do an act of justice to a much misunderstood and grossly abused branch of Birmingham industry—that of jewellery. It has been usual, almost from time immemorial, to describe any article of manufacture, especially in the precious metals, which appeared of doubtful quality or workmanship, under the generic term of "*Brummagem*." This epithet involves the very essence of the term "*sham*." Unfortunately, on the one side, there has been but too much foundation for the term being understood to represent something at once very pretentious and very unreal, but it is equally unfortunate that on the other side much excellence, alike in design and handicraft, has been misrepresented and misunderstood. It is desirable, therefore, to call attention to the fact, that whilst Birmingham jewellery has made a decided advance within the last three or four years, alike in design and excellence of workmanship, it is not the unreal thing some persons appear to imagine; nor does it follow that, because, as compared with the highest class of jewellery, there is not that weight of metal used which is in itself bullion value only, that the gold used is less pure than in the more *solid* article. And here it may be desirable to explain the technical use of this word "*solid*." In the Birmingham sense it does not imply that the whole mass of form is filled up with metal, but that all the metal used in the manufacture is of the standard value it purports to be.

In order to illustrate, as far as circumstances would permit, the present state of design as applied to the manufacture of jewellery and ornaments for the person in Birmingham, a small but varied selection has been made from the productions of some sixteen manufacturers, and in order that no article should be specially prepared, all have been collected within the last three days, in some instances from stocks in which very little choice could be exercised, from the constant demand for the articles as fast as they can be manufactured. These will give a general idea of the style and character of the articles now in the course of production for the home market. Of course they are not sold retail as Birmingham make. They are indifferently recommended to the public as "*Town made*," "*Paris made*," or as the special productions of Pekin, or Timbuctoo, or any other place rather than of Birmingham! The change in the character of the designs of these productions must strike every person who has paid any attention to works of a similar class as manufactured some

years ago. The vulgar contrast of coloured stones, the obtrusive and inappropriate details in the ornamentation, the loose character of the workmanship, have in a great measure vanished; and except that the Birmingham manufacturers have still the traditional fear of shooting over the heads of their customers, by making their articles too chaste and unobtrusive, it is quite clear, after a careful examination, that as beautiful work, alike in design and execution, can be, and often is, produced at Birmingham as at any other place where the jewellery in ordinary demand is manufactured.

It must, however, be carefully borne in mind that this industry is in a transition state of even more recent date than that of the other manufactures we have noticed, and that, from an intense and unreasoning vulgarity, it has had to make its way to something like fixity of principle and purity of style. In effecting this, the first step has been to make a brooch like a brooch in form; to try to get rid of the conceits so much in vogue, and to appeal to the eye of the purchaser rather by sparkling and brilliant effects in a concentrated form than in the outrageously diffusive contrasts of twisted gold and coloured stones. The revival of the use of the cameo, with its quiet tints and expressive forms, would appear to have had a tendency to produce a still further leaning towards quiet effects, in which thoughtful arrangement and skilful handicraft takes the place of careless redundancy and hurried construction. In some of the signet and ladies' rings, shirt studs and pins, now displayed, the character of the setting is as pure and unexceptionable as the most fastidious person could desire.

It is not, then, too much to assert that a great step has been made in the right direction as regards design as applied to the manufacture of Birmingham jewellery in all its leading branches. Of course in the speciality of imitative jewellery there is the same foundation for distrust as ever, and it is to the reproach of our Registration of Designs law, that the manufacturer of the genuine article is the constant victim of imitators of his best designs in spurious metal: as of course these people do not find it to their advantage to make new designs, but to copy those of a genuine character which have been found most successful in the market.

MISCELLANEOUS MANUFACTURES.

Having thus glanced at the progress of art-manufacture under the four great sections into which it has been thought most convenient to divide our national industry for the immediate object in view, it is now desirable to indicate, before concluding, some evidences of improvement in other manufactures which cannot be said to come within either category.

In the general style of furniture manufactured in England there does not appear to have been that improvement which might have been expected, except probably in the accessories of carved work. In this latter respect there is certainly considerable improvement in executive skill, but as regards the question of its application it is quite clear that we have much to learn on this head. On the production of high-class furniture, the Great Exhibition of 1851 has exercised a decided influence, and since that event works have been successfully carried out which a few years ago would not have been attempted. Still, in all that applies to the supply of the general wants of the people, little change appears to have been effected.

In the manufacture and decoration of Papier Mâché there appears to be a growing tendency towards a more severe style of ornamentation; but this, so far as Birmingham is concerned, has not manifested itself at present in a very palpable form. The facile power of hand displayed by our jappanners is often very great, but this is too frequently directed by nothing more than the merest tradition of the workshop. The inventive power, too, of some of the most talented is also very great; but being undisciplined by a knowledge of the

laws which govern composition in ornament, they are rather the producers of clever accidents in arrangement, than designers in the full sense of the term. On the whole, it seems probable that the japanning trade will not show more than a gradual approximation to finer styles of ornamentation for some time to come, and that the changes needed and gradually introduced will be rather the result of the improvements in other departments of ornamental industry being taken up from time to time, and adapted to the wants of the japanner and his employer, than from any determinate and well understood effort after original and artistic results as arising out of the study of the elementary principles of decoration.

From the individual character of the production of each of the leading houses in the japanning trade in Birmingham and Wolverhampton, there is evidence enough of an enormous scope for any amount of art-knowledge, as applied to this industry; yet, strange to say, very few japanners know how to draw, and fewer still care to undergo a course of systematic training. So long as this state of things exists, employers may calculate upon little improvement in their manufacture; and with a beautiful material, great facilities in production, almost boundless variety in pigments, gold and silver powders, gold leaf, and pearl, the higher qualities of design will remain dormant for want of educated power in the worker.

The question of interior decorations of buildings does not come within the purpose of this paper, but the manufacture of wall-papers may very properly claim some attention. If any one ever attempts to write a work upon "The Natural History of Ugliness," the paper-hangings manufactured in Great Britain and the United States would certainly stand in the first class of the genus *super-ugly*. Yet, even in this apparently almost hopeless manufacture, so far as regards the probability of anything like artistic influence being brought to bear upon it, a very decided improvement has taken place. Nor is this improvement manifested in the higher class of papers, which, in many respects, are as outrageous in form and colour as ever, as in the cheaper kind; those, in fact, which, being printed by machine, are adapted to the wants and means of the great mass of the people. In these, pretty and effective diapers have taken the place of the strange things which formerly disfigured the paper and the walls upon which it was hung, and in many instances persons of education and taste prefer these simple patterns, even for rooms in which they would desire to place a costly paper, because the result is so much more pleasing than the designs they would be compelled to take in a high-class article. Of course there are exceptions to this tendency to redundant ornamentation in gold and colour in the first-class paper hangings, and, as might have been expected, many of the leading houses of the metropolis take care that attention is paid to the character of the designs they employ, keeping in mind that, beside the carpet and the wall, there are other things in a room which have some little claim to be seen, and that the ladies do not care to be always compelled to dress up to the key-note of colour pitched by a wall-paper of intense brilliancy of tints and powerful self-assertion in the forms of the ornamentation. In fact, there is a lurking suspicion in the minds of upholsterers and paper-hanging manufacturers that, after all, "those fellows who write on art" may not be so far wrong, when they assert that a wall-paper when put in its place should form a decorated back-ground.

There are doubtlessly other manufactures (which attention might be called, but it is feared with very little chance of indicating much progress. Some of these may possibly suggest themselves to others; if so, it is trusted that in the observations to which this brief summary of the present position of manufactures in their relation to art will give rise, these may be mentioned.

One great object of this paper has been to elicit a record of progress out of the remarks which it is to be hoped will be made by others; each, in his own speciality at

least, more competent perhaps than the writer to give an opinion, either negative or affirmative. Finally, it is earnestly hoped that the result will be such a comparison of notes and experience as may enable all interested in the subject under consideration to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion,—first, as to what we have done; second, as to what we are doing; and, last, "though not least" in importance, as to what we need to do in design as applicable to the great staple industries of our country.

DISCUSSION.

The SECRETARY stated that he had received a number of communications on the subject of Mr. Wallis's paper from different gentlemen, but as the time at the disposal of the meeting was very limited, perhaps the members would prefer reading them in the *Journal* to his doing so then. (See page 302, *et seq.*) He should state that the Society was indebted to Messrs. Kerr and Binns (late Chamberlain's) for the imitation of Limoges ware; also to Mr. C. F. Hancock (of Bond-street) for the racing plate and higher class of jewellery, including a group in silver, illustrating the death of Lord Francis Villiers, and the unequal contest held by him against the soldiers of Cromwell, narrated in Clarendon's History of the Rebellion; a group in silver, a scene from Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe;" the Templar, Sir Brian de Bois Gilbert, an equestrian figure, accompanied by Prior Aymer, "on his well-fed ambling mule," meeting with Gurth and Wamba, the Saxon serf and jester of Cedric, the Saxon—oxydised; a tazza, or vase, surmounted by an allegorical figure of memory, and two cups of the past half-century, illustrating the progress of design in racing plate during that period; and to numerous Birmingham firms for the loan of articles to illustrate the paper.

Mr. HYDE CLARKE wished to make a few remarks upon the observations contained in Mr. Wallis's paper, relative to the influence which buyers had in textile manufactures. He had shown that the buyers stood between the manufacturer and the consumer, and prevented the genuine productions of the former from reaching the hands, or even the sight of the latter—and he held out rather a hopeless prospect of amendment in that respect. But there was one safeguard against it, for the Exhibitions which had been carried out under the auspices of that Society, and the international ones of 1851 and 1855 enabled the manufacturer to bring his own genuine designs before the public at large, free from any extraneous influence. Though Mr. Wallis had only pointed out the textile manufactures as being influenced by this cause, there were other branches of manufacture which had likewise suffered. They saw that the designs which were produced expressly for the Exhibitions, and not for the market, were in many cases highly appreciated by the public and purchased direct from the manufacturer at the Exhibitions where they were exhibited, and their adoption has been forced upon the trade. Now, looking upon those Exhibitions—not as isolated examples which are never to occur again, but as great and permanent institutions—there was great hope for the progress of art in manufacture, and for the means of getting rid of the influence which had been adverted to.

The CHAIRMAN said, the paper which had been read was one which must be most suggestive of points for discussion, and he thought there must be many persons present who could not at all agree with what had been laid down by Mr. Wallis, and who would perhaps be good enough to give the meeting their views on the subject. There was one gentleman present who was always listened to, when he spoke on these subjects, with the greatest attention, he alluded to Mr. Ruskin; and perhaps that gentleman would be good enough to favour the meeting with his views as to the tendency of our manufactures at the present time.

Mr. RUSKIN was quite sure that the Society must be grateful to Mr. Wallis for the clearness with which he

had brought certain facts before them, and he should not venture to contravene the principles which seemed to be involved in the statement, because he was not sure how far certain other principles might be accepted, though not stated, by Mr. Wallis. There were many things which he had stated that he (Mr. Ruskin) should feel it otherwise his duty to oppose, but he thought they afforded rather the materials for a subsequent paper. He would rather request information from Mr. Wallis as to the exact sense in which his principles were to be received, for he could not arrive at any definite notion as to what the general idea of excellence was, by which each branch of art was tested. They had heard, for instance, an ungallant attack upon the ladies for promoting a base manufacture of carpets—admitting the complete imitation of flowers. He could not blame the ladies in this, chiefly because he knew a most respectable and long-established firm, engaged in carpet manufacture on an extensive scale, which conducted its business on the principle Mr. Wallis opposed. He referred to the firms whose head-partners, the months of April and May, supplied a large part of the world with green carpets, in which floral design was largely introduced, and he believed generally to the satisfaction of the public. Nor could he see, since the first thing we usually did to make the ground fit to be walked upon by any festive procession, was always to strew flowers upon it, why we should refuse to have flowers on our carpets, lest we should stumble over them, any more than we should refuse to have pictures on our walls lest we should knock our heads through them; and he was astonished, presently afterwards, to hear Mr. Wallis speak with exultation of success in imitation of Palissy ware, since assuredly, if appearance of projection were wrong in a carpet, real projection must be wrong in a dish. He had profound respect for Palissy, and delighted in his work—as work merely—but of all the useless dishes that ever were invented, Palissy's were the most so. You could not cut your meat on them, you could not get a spoonful of gravy out of them, and if we were not to be allowed to have flowers on our carpets, why were we to be allowed to have vipers on our plates? He wished also to hear from Mr. Wallis more explanation of his (Mr. Wallis's) meaning in saying that beauty was as cheap as ugliness. In a certain sense it was so, as referred especially to manufactures which might be multiplied by machinery; but there were some kinds of manufacture which could not be multiplied altogether by machinery. He repudiated in all earnestness the allegation of not wishing that noble works of art should be brought before the public. He could only say, that he had taken a great deal of trouble, and gone to considerable expense for the purpose of getting the best he could of Turner's *liber Studiorum*; and that those very impressions he (Mr. Ruskin) had given into the hands of engravers, that they might be copied, and rendered thus attainable to the general public. But he was, nevertheless, prepared to maintain briefly these points—first, that good art should not be cheap; secondly, that it, in one sense, could not be cheap; and thirdly, that if in any sense it could be cheap, that is accessible, they were not going the right way to make it so. First that it ought not to be cheap. The body required no change in its food; the soul did. That was one main difference between them. All who possessed any dear piece of art they liked, would feel that every time they looked at it they liked it better, because there was always in it something new—some new element for instruction. But if they saw continually elsewhere the same picture, they would soon be struck with a feeling of dislike for that which otherwise it would be their delight to look upon. Also, when art was too common it would fail to excite attention. The great enjoyment of art was when the whole mind was bent upon it. Great art ought to be accessible, but not to be multiplied in a way which would diminish the power of attention. Further, he believed great art *could* not be cheap. Some kinds of it could be so by being multiplied; and no person had

greater sympathy than he had for those inventions which would enable copies of good works of art to be placed within the reach of the people. But let there be a careful discrimination between *multiplication* and *production*. Multiplication might be very ingenious and very useful, but we were not artists because we multiplied the works of others. And the highest art was more or less to be defined as the expression of a great human mind by the body that contains it—expression of brains through the *fingers*. In no way, therefore, could good art ever become cheap in production; we ought to desire only that when produced, it should be thoroughly accessible to all, and that the people, as far as they have the power of producing it themselves, should be assisted and encouraged to do so. The paper had seemed to dwell wholly upon the advantage of art to the consumer, or only to the producer as a mercantile matter. He was sorry it did not show the effect of the production of art upon the workman; surely the happiness of the workman was a thing which ought to be considered; and that brought him to the third point—the way in which so far as art might be cheap or accessible at all, it might be by what we did for our workers. He had some knowledge of what could be done by the workmen, and of what talent they possessed, and therefore he feared the tendency to depreciate this imitation of nature which ran through Mr. Wallis's paper; for all that he (Mr. Ruskin) had been able to do with any success was by directing the workmen expressly to nature. Mr. Ruskin fully accepted two of Mr. Wallis's principles, namely that the *material* and the *use* of the object to be produced should be first consulted; he heartily wished that those two rules were accepted by all, and steadily adhered to, and that, in one branch of art especially—now coming daily more and more into practice—painting on glass, it were always remembered by the workman that the use of a window was to let in light; that the virtue of the glass in a window was to be transparent; and that all art which tried to represent it as opaque—as a picture, instead of a window, was mistaken and absurd. But accepting fully these two laws laid down by Mr. Wallis, and holding always that no art-production was right, unless first of all serviceable for its proper purpose, he pleaded beyond this, for the direction of the mind of the workman straight to nature, whenever he had to introduce ornament at all. All the true nobleness of art had come from people loving nature in some way or the other, expressing their sentiments about nature; and exactly in proportion as the reference to nature became more direct, the art became nobler. So, then, art was to be encouraged—not by multiplying productions of past times, but by educating the workmen of our own—and after having filled their minds with knowledge of natural objects, leaving them free to invent continually new forms of objects, and new applications of their knowledge. And by thus proceeding we should elevate our workmen, and make them happy; and the ends of commerce would, at least, be answered far more effectually by producing thoroughly new articles than by multiplying forms of old ones.

Mr. J. G. CRACE had heard with much interest and satisfaction the interesting paper read by Mr. Wallis, and he fully concurred in the opinions that gentleman had expressed on the principles that should govern designs for the various branches of manufacture. He could not, therefore, but dissent from much that had been expressed by the last speaker, who differed in many points from Mr. Wallis, and though he (Mr. Crace) admired his beauty of language and power of expression, yet his arguments seemed to be so weak, while the principles he (Mr. Crace) advocated were so strong, that they might not suffer even by his want of ability to give them due expression. Beginning with the remarks on textile fabrics, it was to carpets that Mr. Ruskin more particularly alluded. He said that what was beautiful in nature could not be out of place however exhibited, and he repudiated the *system* of flatness which Mr. Wallis considered so essential a

quality of carpet design. Mr. Crace thought that Mr. Ruskin misunderstood the remarks of Mr. Wallis on flowers, which he did not altogether condemn, but said that they should be introduced with due discretion, and he certainly added that, admitting the flowers, it was not necessary that the flower basket should be represented too. If the floor on which we walked was a flat surface surely it should look so, our footsteps should not be puzzled by treading on projections in imitation of objects in relief; and besides, was it not an essential quality of design that it should be adapted to the nature of the material; the stitches, so to call them, of a carpet had a certain size, and it was not possible to imitate the shadows as accurately as by the brush, and he (Mr. Crace) maintained that the beauty of flowers on a carpet was increased by such breadth in the lights and shadows of the flowers, as would preserve that flatness so essential to the suitability of a carpet design. Referring next to Ceramic manufacture, Mr. Ruskin asked how could Mr. Wallis condemn flowers in carpets and yet commend the skill displayed in an imitation of Palissy ware, in which objects of nature were imitated in relief? but this was surely a misapprehension; the suitability of the design was not the question, but the art displayed, gratification at finding men do such works now again in 1856 as Palissy executed four hundred years ago. Next we came to metal work, and on this subject it was that Mr. Ruskin expressed himself as so much opposed to cheap art, and strongly condemned the multiplication of a beautiful object. There were on the table some beautiful groups of figures, executed in silver, but from the nature of the work, and the material and the labour bestowed, they were far too costly to be in the hands but of very few. If, by any scientific process, the full beauty of the originals could be preserved, and the work of art could be enjoyed by thousands, surely you would not condemn that process. He did not understand Mr. Ruskin's opinions, for though he said it was revolting to the feelings of a possessor of a fine work of art to discover that the object he so loved was to be found repeated elsewhere, yet he told us that the gems he had collected he was having reproduced for public circulation. He could not condemn copies of beautiful paintings by engraving, or the casts in plaster of marble statues, such as the Venus de Medici, or the Apollo, and surely if by a modern invention we could have perfect imitations of beautiful works in metal, he would not oppose this. Paperhangings were, Mr. Crace thought, also remarked on, and an allusion made to the Camera de Correggio as showing that flowers and trellis-work and sportive children were introduced in wall and ceiling decoration by so great a man. No one could object to a work of genius so displayed, but he should most strongly object to a vile and vulgar imitation of it as a paper hanging. He would advocate the importance of designing papers suitable for the humble home of a poor man in a consistent and proper style; if cheap, let them at any rate be in good taste and in pleasing colouring, not attempting too much, and doing it well. He had intended to remark on other branches of our manufacture, especially on the more ordinary articles of household furniture, the makers of which often outraged the rules of good taste—more especially by the unnecessary size of the mouldings they used. He had seen an ogee moulding to the top of a wardrobe, large enough for the cornice of a house in King William-street, but the hour was now so late that he felt he ought no longer to trespass on their time. He should only add a remark that much was still in the power of the government towards educating the taste of the people, by bringing before their notice works of decorative art in our public buildings. In France, a minister was appointed for the supervision of public works, a man chosen for his cultivated taste in art, not for political influence, and who directed not only the decorations of public buildings, but ordered pictures and statues to illustrate the history of events; in fact, doing always, and in an extensive sense, what the Royal Commission, presided

over by Prince Albert, was doing for the New Palace at Westminster. By these works a number of artists would be exercised in high branches of art; and, besides thus supplying a school for designers, the public taste would be elevated, and would be better able to appreciate what was good.

Mr. REDGRAVE, R.A., concurred with much that had been said by both the speakers that had preceded him. With regard to Mr. Ruskin's observation, that good art could not be cheap, he thought Mr. Ruskin was looking to fine art, and Mr. Crace to manufactured art. Fine art could not be cheap, but there was another sort of art, which was manufactured by machinery, which might be good and yet cheap. The one was imitative, and proceeded from the love of the artist to nature itself, the other was not necessarily imitative, but arose out of looking to nature and choosing from her all those beauties of form and colour that could be made applicable to a reproductive process. It was very desirable, therefore, that the workman should be induced to look at nature itself, from the study of which alone could novelty and beauty arise. With regard to what Mr. Crace had remarked about carpets, certainly, though we might introduce flowers into our carpets, we should not introduce the flower basket. Yet even that was a slight fault compared with what was oftentimes the case now, namely, that we saw pictures introduced rather than ornament. There had been something said about principles in art, but as we ought to be very modest in selecting what are principles, our only way was to try and collect, from the choice works of the best periods and masters, and the writings of those who had deeply studied them, a code of laws, or principles, as a standard to which we could refer. Mr. Wallis had asserted that there was an improvement in the general taste of art applied to manufacture; this was of course only the assertion of one individual, but if there were any code of laws and rules by which to judge this improvement, it became no longer a mere assertion; and we should never be able to decide whether there was really an advance or not until some such standard was established. They had arrived at one or two tests that evening, on which all seemed agreed, the test, namely, that utility was to be the first object to be considered; they then went on to the proper use of materials, and they thus obtained another true principle which could go towards arriving at some code of rules or some standard by which they could tell whether any advance in art as applied to manufactures had been made or not, and thirdly they had determined that there was a degree of subordination in the various objects ornamented by which we were to give to one more prominent decoration than to another. As these rules became established in men's minds, at least some criterion as to advance or retrogression would be arrived at, and he hoped this was advanced by the discussion that had taken place.

Mr. VARLEY said that the Chairman had reminded him of a former statement, when he used the word "cooking," which would apply to design as well as to anything else—namely, the necessity of some prior preparation to adapt nearly everything we use to our purpose. By cooking, much that could not be used was rendered usable, and all food was rendered more wholesome and more agreeable by it. Now the art of design was only a more perfect adaptation to our use of the articles we needed. On going to a new country we might find materials for everything, and yet be helpless till art came to our aid. There might be timber of value to the merchant, minerals and clay for tools and vessels, vegetables and animals for food, and yet he must use skill before he could shape and adapt these to serve his various wants; and as cooking destroyed all original and sometimes disagreeable identity, and reduced the materials into a new form, which was only needful and agreeable food, so the arts of construction and design removed from us all attention to the original state of the material, and gave us useful articles for our necessity, so clothed in beauty as to remove all ideas of their necessity, and instead stimulate our minds with joy and

delight. Thus, all things were either cooked or clothed for our more comfortable use; and what was needed to guide and regulate design was order and due precedence. Mr. Wallis alluded to carpet designs. Some persons said that the pattern should indicate flatness, without any relief, as a surface to walk on, and that they should be subordinate to the furniture. Nature would decide that distinct relief was good, for the earth was clothed with grass and meadow flowers, on which we and animals freely walked. We only removed such bushes and branches as would obstruct our free progress, and we enjoyed the soft velvety tread and the silence of our steps. On a boarded floor, the noise of moving chairs, and of our steps, was often a nuisance; carpets cured it and added an agreeable softness to our tread. **Having a carpet**, its colour and its pattern became of consequence. But where great numbers were assembled there would be much confusion and obstruction if the laws of precedence did not decide who should move first, second, and third. This secured order and comfort; so, if the first personage, the architect, was to design the room suitable for the required furniture, and dictate the colour and design of that furniture, then the carpet design would come in third; if the furniture was massive and plain, a rich texture or pattern in the carpet would make that plainness agreeable; but if rich in carving and ornament, then a quiet pattern was needed to give the furniture precedence. In designing a carpet, the building, the furniture, and the sort of company should dictate its character, colour, and pattern. But now, for want of order, the architect could rarely assume his precedence, and the cabinetmaker did not respectfully follow his steps; so the carpet designer, being without his proper guide, made various designs, and left the public to match them according to their own notions. The liberal possessor of Newstead Abbey, Col. Wildman, had suited his furniture to the abbey, having richly carved cabinets with bible history in bold relief, the chairs and tables light and elegant, with many other accompaniments, to keep up a rich union of the whole, and with due reference to the poetic spirit planted there by Byron. Fitness and proportion are essential parts of beauty; and whatever design was made, it should be with reference to the place and other designs with which it was to be associated. Proportion was not sufficiently attended to in the union of sculpture and architecture. St. Paul's looked very grand from Blackfriars-bridge; but the figures on it, which ought to be its guage, were eleven feet high, and therefore kept contradicting the impression of size. As groups, the size was right, but the figures composing them ought to be life-size, as they were the only visible guage of its great size.

MR. RUSKIN wished to explain that he was anxious to lay before the public all good works of art, though not to such an extent as to allow them to become distasteful. He believed that if all men of dignity and standing in the arts were to meet and settle a few principles, and make them the goals of art in all schools of design, it would be of incalculable advantage. They had to fulfil the duty of imparting a true taste in design, not only to the producer, but also to the consumer, but this duty could never be properly performed until all were agreed upon some principles which should form a basis.

THE CHAIRMAN having called upon Mr. Wallis to close the discussion by any remarks he might desire to make,

MR. WALLIS said, that he felt that the various points of the paper which had been touched upon had been fairly treated as a whole, but it was necessary to state that the subject was not art in its general and highest manifestation, but "art as applied to manufactures." This had been somewhat lost sight of. With reference to the carpet question, he thought that as Mr. Varley could not remember whether the room he had quoted had a carpet or not, but supposed that the floor was covered with one, that was the very best possible evidence to him (Mr. Wallis) that the carpet was not a very bad

one in design, and did not assert itself very strongly in form or colour, and, therefore, was in its right place, or Mr. Varley would have remembered it. His own test of a tastefully decorated room was, that if on thinking about it after he had left it, no one object came prominently to his mind, there was not much the matter with it. He did not care to feel the sensation of having been within a twelfth cake turned outside inward, which was the only parallel he could give of the decorative effects of some rooms. With respect to Mr. Ruskin's remarks, he must thank that gentleman for a verbal criticism, since the term "multiplication" ought to have been used instead of that of "duplication." It was quite clear, too, that in great efforts in art, where the individual worker alone was employed, that the work should indeed be the expression of the whole man, but this scarcely applied to works of utility, produced as they must be in great numbers; not but that the more the spirit of the worker was infused into them the better they would be executed. With respect to the question of cheap art in its highest form, it could no more be obtained than cheap gold or cheap diamonds; but the question in hand was really that of the production of articles of manufacture into which art entered as an important element; and in this respect he (Mr. Wallis) maintained that the art might be materially cheapened, so as to bring it, more or less, within the means of all. Mr. Ruskin's charge of inconsistency in his (Mr. Wallis's) approval of the revival of Palissy ware, and condemnation of the ultra-naturalesque in ornament as applied to articles of utility, was unfortunately itself inconsistent, especially in the example Mr. Ruskin had quoted, since it happened that a "Palissy dish" was in reality no dish at all for use, but simply an ornament, the surface of which was so covered with imitations of animals and plants, that no room was left upon which to place anything else; in short, though an object of beauty, it was not one of utility, in the strict sense of the term, when applied to a manufactured article. Mr. Wallis approved of the revival of the manufacture of Palissy ware, because it would lead to truth of imitation, and thence to better things in ornament. His doctrine as a teacher had ever been imitation first, and then invention or design. He always urged this upon his students, and would allow no attempt at invention except as based upon accurate imitation. He fully sympathised with Mr. Ruskin in his anxiety that the workman should take an interest in his work. It had ever been his aim with his students to endeavour to project some portion, at least, of his own earnestness into them; for he did claim to be earnest in his work, he the results what they might; and few things had consoled him more during the fourteen years' experience he had had in schools of art, than seeing his students earnestly, and in all truthfulness, pursuing their daily career with a zest for their occupation. If this love of his work was once infused into a man, much had been done towards laying the foundation for his future progress; and the more a workman understood the "why and wherefore" of that work, the greater the interest he would take in it. Hence the value of sound instruction, line upon line, form upon form, principle upon principle, even to the end. His subject had been "improvement in design," but he could have wished to have said much about improvement in handicraft power, for he believed that much had been effected in this direction, and that one of the difficulties which used formerly to beset any effort after a better style of art—the lack of working power to execute it intelligently, was fast being overcome. This was an important point, since to make designers without workmen was useless, whilst a few designers in each department of industry would be sufficient for the employment of a large number of workmen; thus the great object of all instruction in art, as applied to manufacture, would be accomplished, the brain power being sure of realisation by educated hand power.

A vote of thanks having been passed to Mr. Wallis on the motion of the Chairman,

The SECRETARY stated that the paper to be read at the meeting of Wednesday next, the 19th inst., was "On the Principles Regulating the Transfer of Useful Plants of one Country to Another," by Mr. Maxwell T. Masters. On this evening Dr. Forbes Royle, F.R.S., will preside.

The following are the letters referred to by the Secretary:—

Mr. W. C. AITKEN (of Birmingham) says:—

"I exceedingly regret that I cannot be present at your meeting to-morrow evening, to take part in the discussion which will doubtless follow the reading of Mr. Wallis's paper on "Recent Progress in Design as applied to Manufactures," the proof of which you have kindly sent me for perusal. In his remarks, as to taking advantage of the recent discoveries made in modern science and in their application to manufactures, I entirely concur, as also in those which refer to the effect which the labours of the late A. W. Pugin exercised on all the subjects which he touched, but more particularly in his placing prominently before the public and manufacturers, the principle that fitness for the purpose, in connection with suitable ornamentation, should ever be kept in view, and that the latter should ever be kept subservient to the former. These views I adopted and propounded at length in a paper read by me before your Society, "On Ancient and Modern Metal Working," on the evening of the 15th of February, 1854, and which will be found in page 229, Vol. II. of the Society's *Journal*, to which I respectfully refer the members. The causes which have operated in producing those improvements in design to which Mr. Wallis alludes, are somewhat numerous; we have at work, in addition to our Schools of Art, our illustrated periodicals and books on ornament; in the van of these we have the *Art Journal*, the works of M. Digby Wyatt, of Owen Jones, and the impetus given by the various Exhibitions of manufactures in connection with your Society; the Birmingham Exhibition of 1849, the Universal Exhibition of 1851, and the French Exhibition of 1855. These Exhibitions, by disclosing at a glance the true state of art manufactures, and affording the means of comparison, insensibly forced the good on the mind when contrasted with the bad, and the eye and taste became educated thereby; the result has been that the general public has been educated in art; and the articles distinguished formerly by crude, imperfect, and inappropriate ornament are now comparatively seldom asked for, at least not by those of the middle and upper classes, who have been enabled by these means to examine for themselves collective assemblages of art industry. As to the means by which the want of a superior class of articles has been supplied to meet the better taste alluded to, it cannot be denied (however humiliating it may be for us to acknowledge it) that we have received very great assistance, not only from French designs, but from the actual employment of French draughtsmen, modellers, and chasers, &c., in our large manufactories. If the necessary talent could not be had at home, we could afford to import it from other countries, and we have done so. In doing so, however, we have only followed the steps taken by the French Kings and Emperors, who invited to their courts all the great artists of their periods whose works of art and practical knowledge of processes was likely to operate in raising art, fine and manufacturing, and encouraging an appreciation of it among the people. The influence of such a course is still apparent, and the quiet surface of the *renaissance* period is that which is now operating most forcibly among ourselves; the result is that large projections in ornament, interfering with outline and contour, are now but seldom recognised and employed by our leading houses, and this has insensibly introduced a style of design better suited to a refined taste.

"I differ from Mr. Wallis in his remarks as to the

glass trade, and think the want of purity of material has its rise in competition, not in neglect; the absence of purity is not the result of indifference, or want of knowledge as to the component materials of which glass is formed. The cost at which glass articles for ordinary sale must be produced necessitates the employment of cheap alkalies, and the use of sand without its being entirely freed from the metallic oxides with which it is frequently impregnated; metallic oxides are employed to colour glass; their presence in a minute degree operates identically in the same way to the advantage of purity in the flint variety.

"Among the most crystalline glass ever made in this country, was that produced by Messrs. Richardson, of Stourbridge. Its purity arose from a thorough cleansing of iron particles by means of magnets. The other impurities were got rid of by careful examination and washing. During the preparations for the display in the Exhibition of 1851, considerable attention was paid to the manufacture of the coloured ornamental examples, and with the best results; Bohemia and Venice were all but rivalled. Since the Exhibition, however, the demand for articles of this class has not been great, and as much attention has not been given to the subject as it deserves. The support of large objects in glass, by means of internal metal rods plated on their external parts, opened a new field for the employment of design in glass. This improvement is largely due to the Messrs. Osler, of this town, and has been taken advantage of by them. The pressed glass process, alluded to by Mr. Wallis, has afforded the means of cheap production so far as ornament is concerned; the construction of the moulds, however, limits the contour, and somewhat circumscribes the field for design. The best examples produced have been those of a simple character in their ornamentation. Where least has been attempted the objects produced have been the most successful. With no desire to hark back, it would be well were our glass-workers to depend more upon simple contour, arising from manipulation in blowing and engraving, than upon cutting, to give value to their works. In this it would be well did they take a hint from the old Venetians, magnificent examples of whose works have recently been most judiciously added to the Marlborough House museum, and are well figured in the illustrated catalogue sold there.

"In metal manufactures, more particularly in those of the precious metals, Mr. Wallis has wisely adopted the intelligent opinion of Mr. Redgrave, expressed in his paper "On Design," appended to the Report of the Juries of the Exhibition of 1851. Art, rather than bullion value, is the thing to be desired in works executed in the precious metals. The 'dig' at the Naturalist School of Ornament is a fair one, but whence its origin? Simply in the want of a knowledge of design, and the desire to avoid mental labour, conjoined with an ignorance of conventional treatment. As familiarity with design becomes more general, such productions will be less frequently seen; even now it is evident that the style has reached, and is even now in, its decadence. Allusion is made to the influence exercised, or supposed to have been exercised, by the French Exhibition of 1844. On the metal trades a far greater influence, however, was at work, viz., the importation of French window cornices and other stamped work. Competition became a necessity on the part of the English manufacturer. It was, therefore, natural that something akin to works which sold so readily must be tried as a substitute. Without intelligence to guide them it is to be wondered at that in their attempt to out-Herod Herod things of a similar kind were produced. Now, however, the French are at a stand-still, and produce stamped brass-work of as fligid a character as ever, even reproducing, because they sell a class of articles formed by a union of glass and stamped brass, examples of which were honoured with a place in the now defunct "Chamber of Horrors." The same walk has been essayed by the German manufacturers of stamped goods, who have copied even our errors, and displayed them

on their stalls at Paris in the Exhibition. In this particular department we have turned the corner, and left behind some of our extravagances. When stamped cornices are now made, the ornamentation, if not all that could be desired, is, at all events, of a quieter and more unobtrusive character.

"In gas-fittings and chandeliers it will be found on examination—always keeping in view that those examined have been recently produced, and by respectable manufacturers—that there is in them a change for the better, that they are not of the 'gooseberry-bush turned upside down' class, and that there is visible in them a greater attention to non-interference with the diffusion of the light, arising out of a more graceful and elegant style of construction and ornamentation being adopted. Were, however, the facilities for education in modelling to be somewhat more extended and as free as in France, and were it cultivated to the same extent as it was shown to be in that country by Mr. Redgrave in his late speech at Birmingham, who could doubt but that even a greater improvement than there has been would be speedily apparent.

"I could have wished that in the remarks of Mr. Wallis on jewellery, he had alluded to the influence which French jewellery has exercised upon our own, and to the very splendid display which occupied a large portion of the gallery in the Paris Exhibition, leaving out of the question altogether the works of Froment Meurice and Rudolphi, which, from their great cost, places them beyond the reach of even the middle classes. Some allusion to French jewellery, in connection with the works of our jewellers, would have been very useful, and all the more so had he stated how varied were the forms, how original; and as to the liberal use which had been made of the enamel process in their ornamentation, the introduction of colours more numerous and difficult to produce than it is customary or possible for our jewellers to employ, at least up to the present time they have not done so. The reaction in favour of Birmingham goods had its origin in the local exhibition of the town, and the addition to the exhibits shown in the Exhibition of 1851 of the manufacturers' names. Mr. Wallis does not appear to have alluded to the effect produced by the new method of casting zinc in iron moulds, and thereafter bronzing them, as a source from which art objects, or things for use of an ornamental character could be produced at a cheap rate, or rather have been; and how much such has operated, and is likely to operate, in improving the character of our works in metal. I could have wished he had done so. How well they are suited for this purpose, every one who has examined the works of the Vieille Montange Company must have felt convinced.

"There are other topics upon which I might have dilated, important in themselves, as elements in the still further improvement in design as applied to our manufactures of a superior, or even of a commoner class, but my time and your space preclude the possibility of my doing so. The causes which have led to the improvements, and to which Mr. Wallis has alluded, should not, I consider, be overlooked; and of these I have enumerated a few. With the general tenor of Mr. Wallis's paper I agree, with the exceptions stated.

"I earnestly desire that the improvement in design as applied to our manufactures may progress in the same proportion as it has done during the past ten years; and, in order to assist in this desirable end, that our schools of art may be increased in efficiency by their means of support being quadrupled; that illustrated works treating upon ornament, such as the industrial arts of the nineteenth century; Wyatt's metal work; the Grammar of Ornament of Owen Jones (now in progress of being published) should be more universally circulated than they have been; and last, but by no means least, that museums or collective assemblages of objects akin to, and suggestive of, improvement in the special manufactures of our great centres of industry, should be instituted for the art

education of the artisans employed therein; these are the means to an end, which all interested in our national progress must earnestly desire to see arrived at."

M. LOUIS ARNOUX (of Stoke-upon-Trent) says:—

"Messrs. Hollins and Campbell have sent me the proof of Mr. Wallis's paper, 'Recent Progress in Design as applied to Manufactures,' and although I agree with him in most of his views, yet there is a point or two on which I differ, chiefly as to the cause of the recent improvements in our Fictile Manufactures. Certainly there has been a general demand for better articles than those previously brought out; but as far as I can judge, during the seven years I have been residing in the Potteries, it is due more to the good taste and artistic talent of Mr. Minton, and his knowledge of the best way of improving all branches of his manufacture, than to any other cause. The competition, too, which existed for many years between his firm and that of Messrs. Copeland, could not fail to produce an excellent effect. According to my judgment the greatest improvement has been effected in the modelling department; and if Mr. Wallis will refer to the late Exhibition, he must admit that Mr. Minton's models, chiefly for Parian and Majolica, would rank in every respect with those of Sèvres, and were far superior to those of any other exhibitor. The same improvement in the painting cannot be affirmed, though a decided progress is taking place.

"I think that Mr. Wallis does not dwell sufficiently on our Majolica and Palissy ware (commonly so-called), and he ought to mention Mr. Minton's name as being the only party using exertions to revive this class of goods. In fact, from the combination of his processes, and the variety of coloured glazes and enamels he uses, Mr. Minton has borrowed as much from the enamellers as from the old pattern of the *renaissance*. If Mr. Wallis remembers what has been produced by the eastern enamellers (Chinese, Arabian, and Byzantine), and that most of the effects they have produced may be repeated now in pottery, he will see what a broad field has been opened for future improvements. Certainly this manufacture has not yet reached perfection, but what is done now has not been done so well since the sixteenth century; and probably further practice will bring us to a higher point. Mr. Wallis knows, at all events, what a difficult problem to solve is the colouring of high relief; and I think that he ought to insist on the introduction of this manufacture, as evincing the most striking progress in the way of accomplishing it.

"Without wishing to despise the inlaid Parian of Messrs. Rickuss and Toft, I may remind Mr. Wallis that it is nothing more than what Mr. Minton has been doing for many years past in his manufacture of encaustic tiles. It was also done previously by Mr. Spode, who made a great many garden-pots in this description of inlaid body. It is nothing but the process first brought into practice by the clever potter who made the 'Henry the Second ware.' As to Messrs. Pratt and Wedgewood's process of enamelling on a red or brown body, they have followed the good examples which were sent to this country years ago from China and India."

MR. JOHN BRAGG (of Birmingham) says:—

"In reply to your invitation I beg to remark, that having taken a deep interest for many years in the improvement of art manufactures, and more especially in that one (jewellery) to a branch of which I devote my attention, I have no hesitation in confirming all that Mr. Wallis states in respect to the improvement which has taken place during the last few years in the style of Birmingham-made jewellery. There has unquestionably been a most remarkable impetus given to the trade, as a manufacture, since 1850, and it is considered by competent authorities that including gold, gold plated, and silver jewellery, with their dependent trades of lapidaries, engravers, enamellers, chasers, &c., there cannot be fewer than five thousand persons employed, entirely and directly, in these branches of the

jewellery trade in Birmingham at the present time. Besides these, we might name the 'gilt toy' trade, which seems to be reviving with a new and superior style of articles. That this increase is wholly due to the improved designs produced is not for a moment pretended, but I state, as the opinion of many with whom I have conversed from time to time on the subject, and most decidedly as a matured opinion of my own, that in a large measure the above prosperity is the result of the generally more elevated taste shown in the articles manufactured.

"Perhaps, also, some share of credit may be given to the circumstance, that in Birmingham we pay great attention to the economics of production, so that an article which in Paris would cost wholesale, say 20s. sterling, and in London would be made for about 17s., would be produced in an equal quality of gold, and a finish almost equal (for in large quantities the finish always suffers a little), for about 14s. This great reduction is effected solely by bringing to bear every possible appliance of mechanical skill throughout every process and stage of the production.

"Still, together with this large wholesale production, we have made great advances in true style, and, I believe, can successfully compete now (on merits alone) with the whole world in all those departments of jewellery which are intended for the use of the middle class of purchasers. We do not pretend to the supply of those exceedingly costly suites and articles which can only find purchasers in the highest ranks of society. That will ever be a trade supported by the court and nobility, and of course will remain in the metropolis. We aim at a neat style and good quality, but at the same time a low price; and the success of the aim is best testified by the prosperity of the trade.

"That the largest part of the jewellery made in this town is sold as London-made, we are absolutely certain; and, indeed, we have almost resigned ourselves (as a body) to this fiction of the 'middle men,' for the shopkeepers are not so much 'sinning' as 'sinned against' in this particular.

"If I were asked to what I attribute this advance in our trade taste, and also in the public taste at the same time, I would say that the public schools of art, the national and provincial exhibitions of art, the wide diffusion (by cheap processes) of fine examples of manufactured artistic goods, and the numerous art publications, critical and illustrative, have been the means of educating the improvement.

"And if I might presume to suggest what would more than anything else now forward the movement, both among manufacturers and the public, as consumers, I would say, 'A book (got out by the Government, if you please, or, perhaps better, by private speculation) in which shall be laid down, in an orderly, progressive, and therefore simple manner, the principles of decorative art, both as to form and surface decoration; and this to be issued in several editions, or rather varieties—viz., one with illustrations and principles bearing upon textile, another upon fictile, another upon metallic productions, &c.—so that a Birmingham student need not purchase all that relates to Manchester or Macclesfield goods, nor the Potteries be compelled to have treatises upon ribbons and jewellery. The one general essay would be the same in all, but the supplemental part would be different in each."

Mr. YOUNG MITCHELL (of the School of Art, Sheffield) says that he agrees "cordially with the views expressed by Mr. Wallis. Any one who has given attention to the subject must allow that the Schools of Art have effected much good, but their great work still remains to be done. They have to educate the public, to give a knowledge of what is true in art, and thus create a demand for the beautiful. This done the manufacturer will supply, as a matter of course."

Mr. JAMES HOULDSWORTH (of Manchester) says:—

"I feel obliged by yours of the 8th, and regret that it will not be possible for me to attend your meeting on

Wednesday. The perusal of Mr. Wallis's paper has given me much pleasure. I look upon it as a valuable record and statement of principles. It is to be regretted that there is not a more general progress to report, though Mr. Wallis has evidently endeavoured to make the most of whatever favourable indications he has seen. My own observation of several branches of trade is confirmatory of his own, and in one only do I entertain a different impression, viz., furniture and cabinet-work. The beautiful specimens I have seen in many first-class cabinetmakers, leads me to think that many of these productions would compare favourably with those of continental manufacture, while it has also struck me that the style of furniture generally has improved, and that better taste prevails in the large manufacturing houses.

"The principles expressed by Mr. Wallis have my hearty concurrence, and in nothing more than in the stress he lays on the position of the middleman in influencing public taste. The retail dealer stands between the manufacturer and the public, and can effectually discourage the one and deprave the other. In complaining, however, that too many of them will not make or keep anything except what they consider good to sell, I am sure Mr. Wallis does not mean that men of business would knowingly make or keep what they consider will not sell! He hints in another place that it is just possible that the taste of the dealer himself may improve. Now, I think, that on this consideration alone can we look for his placing before the public a higher class of goods to choose from. The selection that is made by the public constitutes the taste of the day, and while its character must in the first instance depend on what is offered for selection, approbation will only be due in proportion to the ability of the purchaser to appreciate the best and reject the worst. Our national characteristics, and still less our national education, are not favourable to the cultivation of this discrimination; and though efforts are now making, vulgarity requires time as well as refining influences to diminish its intensity, and generations must grow up under more favourable circumstances for becoming familiar with works of art and good taste, before the public, as a body, will demand a higher class of productions. It becomes then the duty of the retail dealer to guide the public taste. To do this, he must first educate himself, and he will soon find that his knowledge gives him a power over his customer. Successful salesmen of fancy goods vary from others more in their superior information than in any other point. Knowledge of styles and precedents, historical reminiscences, appropriateness of combinations, effect of colours and lights, comparative costs and experience of wear, &c., command an influence over a customer that polished manners, coincident tendencies, and deferential suggestions respecting the beauty of everything exhibited fails to inspire. The best salesmen generally say they can sell anything they like themselves; and I look upon the education of these men as the quickest and most economical way of influencing public taste. Manufacturers may require it as much as they do, and the public even more, but the manufacturer is compelled to keep up to the quality of demand, and stimulus applied to the purchaser acts directly on the former. The education of the public, again, is a larger scheme, and can only be done slowly and indirectly by such means as museums, exhibitions, street architecture, shop windows, &c., and while this should go on and will in time bear fruit, the improvement of those who buy and sell will produce the earliest effect upon the trade of this country.

"I will only add, that I am particularly pleased with the enlightened views which Mr. Wallis expresses on those mechanical, chemical, and other means which every day is adding to our knowledge, and for his repudiation of the idea that art and beauty are to be advanced by ignoring their existence. There are difficulties enough in this world without creating them, and every one is bound to do the best he can with all the means at his disposal. Should the facilities for reproducing and cheapening

works of art or beauty interfere with predilections in favour of uniqueness and exclusiveness, theirs must indeed be a selfish pride and false admiration who see inconsistency and want of taste in the free employment of all God's gifts."

Mr. GEORGE JACKSON (of Manchester) says:—"I very much regret that I shall not be able to avail myself of the kind invitation with which you have honoured me, to attend the reading of Mr. Wallis's paper, on Wednesday evening next. From lengthened intercourse and associated labours, I doubt not that the views he will take of the subject will fully coincide with my own experience and convictions, and I should have been happy of an opportunity of supporting them in the course of the discussion after the paper.

"It may be some support, and illustrate the progress art is making in public estimation, if I relate the result of my observations on passed events since I came to reside here, in the year 1833, confining my remarks more particularly to the building, furnishing, and decorative trades, with which I am more intimately connected. At that period no means of elevating taste or informing the minds of the people on artistic subjects existed. The annual exhibition of the works of modern masters, in the Royal Institution, was the only public display, but the terms of admission were too high, and the hours in the day forbade the great mass of society from seeing it. The staple products of the district had called into existence a certain class of artists, or rather what are technically called designers, whose pursuits led to no beneficial results beyond the manufacture they laboured for. The conventionalities of their style, not being based on the true principles of art, tended rather to depress originality of thought. A large amount of intelligence and persevering inquiry existed; natural history, botany, and music, were cultivated to a state of perfection which rendered the Manchester naturalists and Lancashire choral singers celebrated.

"In my early intercourse with large numbers of the working classes, I was much surprised to find a body of men, who so well understood the theories of the abstract sciences, so little acquainted with the principles of art, or who held such false views of what constituted the beautiful. The wealthy manufacturers and merchants were great patrons of art, and collections of some of the finest works were to be found in this district, but confined exclusively to old masters; modern practitioners had, then, little chance of their support.

"The general habits of the people were of a very low standard; and, in the absence of any public place of resort or general rendezvous, no inducement existed to refine their personal habits or develop the moral feelings. Such was the condition of this district until after the issuing of the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on Arts and Manufactures, in 1836. The publication of that Blue Book speedily aroused attention, and the intelligence of the people was directed to the importance of those departments of art which they had so long neglected. Many thinking minds endeavoured to devise the best method of following up the valuable suggestions the report contained. It was, indeed, the true Magna Charta of the industrial arts, and more or less, as circumstances have permitted, has it been the rule of action and code of laws in all artistic educational movements here. The Mechanics' Institutions were the first to take up the question, the directors being desirous to ascertain the best means of improving their system of instruction in their drawing classes.

"The discussion attracted public attention, and the necessity of a school for disseminating knowledge of the elementary principles of art became manifest, and brought about the establishment of a School of Design. From intimate connection with these movements, I had a good opportunity of ascertaining public feeling amongst all classes of the community, and found it to result, in what might have been expected from such an extended diffu-

sion of scientific knowledge, in the general desire to promote any means that could be offered, or were intended to accomplish what was found to be a desirable end.

"The directors of that institution, seeing the general ignorance that pervaded society of the nature and importance of industrial art, resolved on holding an exhibition of a polytechnic character, which was opened in the winter of 1837-8. The result exceeded the most sanguine expectations. It was open five weeks; the admission fee 6d.; the receipts £1,078; which gives 43,120 visitors, upwards of 8,600 sixpences per week; and it must be borne in mind that, owing to the nature of the avocations of the people, the bulk of this money was received during the evening.

"To the effects produced by this exhibition I attribute much of the progress which has since manifested itself in appreciation of art in this district. It gave an impetus to public attention, and its success led to its imitation in many other parts of the kingdom. To the silent instruction which these exhibitions have administered through the eye, we may attribute the origin of the improvements in taste and desire of knowledge of art that exists at the present day.

"Early in the year 1838, the convictions which the report of 1836 had produced, strengthened by the results of the exhibition, developed the desire of the mass for increased facilities for obtaining knowledge of the principles and practice of art; the School of Design was founded, and, though the sanguine expectations of benefit to be derived from it were not realised, the fault or failure did not arise from the want of support or appreciation of its necessity on the part of the people, but from want of information amongst its conductors as to what ought to be its real object, and how instruction should be imparted.

"The desire which demand has created for increased facility of executing amongst ourselves works of an advanced stage of industrial art began to manifest itself. Facility of intercourse with the Continent induced many of our leading manufacturers and overlookers of works to visit the Exhibition at Paris, in 1844, and most of them returned with a settled conviction of the necessity of urging forward by their influence and means all suggestions that tended to promote the intelligence of the people and inculcate a love of art.

"The School of Design had been remodelled, and was conducted on a system which embodied a class of instruction sought by the industrial classes as being more immediately applicable to their general avocations. A movement at this time was made to establish public parks, the opening of which produced a radical change in the manners and habits of the people; the necessity of cleanliness and a better adornment of the person soon produced its effects; shortening the hours of labour, and the almost universal adoption of the Saturday half-holiday, created a want the parks were well adapted to fulfil. Order and decorum took the place of rude and listless conduct, and induced a habit of thinking, which has resulted in the moral elevation of a large mass of our operative population.

"The success that attended the opening of the parks induced the Salford authorities to open a Museum of Art, &c., in connection with the Peel Park, the statistics of which, to the present time, have been highly satisfactory. The last report of the Council gave the following result as to the number of visitors frequenting it:—

November, 1855	27,000 persons.
December "	26,000
January, 1856	28,000

Donations are continually flowing in, and the building, which has been recently considerably enlarged, is fast becoming too small to afford space for the proper exposition of the specimens of art, &c., they now possess. The success of the Free Library in Salford, induced Sir John Potter, then Mayor of Manchester, to take up the ques-

tion, and he resolutely resolved to solve the problem whether the taste and intelligence of the people were sufficiently advanced to appreciate the privilege of being allowed to read good and standard works on art and literature at their own homes. The proposition to establish the Manchester Free Lending Library met with that energetic support which speedily carried it into effect, and last year, the third of its existence, there were issued—

	Volumes.
To readers in Reference Department ...	66,261
To borrowers in the Lending ditto	81,321

I feel that these statements may appear to be a digression from the main subject; they are inserted with a view to demonstrate the importance of cultivating the habit of refinement of conduct, and the power that these silent instructors, whose influence only affects the eye, exercise in the cultivation of all those feelings of the mind which invariably result in the refinement of taste.

"About the year 1846-7, the Council of the Royal Institution were induced to open the galleries containing the Annual Exhibition of Paintings at an admission fee of twopence, from six until ten o'clock, during the evenings of the last month, or five weeks of its continuance. The amount received exceeded the total receipts of the shilling day admission considerably.

"Such was the state of industrial art about this period; very little facility existed for executing any works without extraneous aid. In the building trades, anything that went beyond the plainest style of moulding or form had to be executed elsewhere, and worked into the construction here. It is not a long time since there was not a stone-carver resident amongst us. Interior ornaments were of a very hackneyed and universally known class, and the execution not above the style. In glass staining we had no one who produced any work much above a plain colour; and the iron and metal works did not extend beyond the casting of a shaft for a steam engine, or the fly-wheel to regulate it. I am happy to say these days are passed, and that in many departments of decorative art we now rank second to no provincial town.

"A great impetus has been given to the building trades by the spirit and enterprise of our merchants and manufacturers, in their desire to make their emporiums of trade carry the appearance and bespeak the magnitude of their transactions. No less fortunate that the demand has produced the men, and we have architects now resident whose labours have resulted in the proof that our street architecture is fast approaching that degree of elegance, originality of conception, and purity of style, of which we may be proud as citizens, and offer an example to other wealthy communities to follow in our path. These remarks are alike applicable to the manner in which the works are executed and to originality of design.

"In the class of trades connected with internal decoration, our strides in improvement have been as great, excepting extraneous addenda. I think we have a class of artisans amongst us now equal to the production of the finest works; and employers, from the intelligence that has been brought to bear upon them, in their general arrangements of harmony of colour and beauty of form, execute works not excelled in the metropolis or elsewhere. The facility for accomplishing this end is mainly owing to the class of talented artisans who, attracted by the rising demand, have migrated hither, and filled the void of general talent so seriously felt in the early time of my residence here.

"For heavy machinery, you are aware, this district is celebrated; and it is a pleasing proof of the power of art that our greatest engineers find that beauty of form economises material and saves labour. Not long since, I was passing with Mr. Whitworth through his works, when he directed my attention to the curves he used, and told me his experience. There stood ponderous machines, without any extraneous ornament or addenda, beautiful in their simplicity, and their utility increased by their beauty.

"In glass manufacture we have made considerable advance, and in some branches of the ornamental character we have houses whose names stand high. A considerable quantity of paper hangings, both machine and block, are now produced here; and in metal work great advances have been made.

"I may further add, that these remarks I have principally written of Manchester; the same will apply with equal force to the out-towns in this district. I am not aware of one in which a marked improvement in industrial art is not visible.

"A fortnight since, at the request of the directors of the Mechanics' Institution, I delivered two lectures on the "Alphabet of Art, and Language and Power of Form," at Lancaster. The admission was free. I had large and very attentive audiences, of all classes of society, from the clergyman and town councillor to the mason and militia man, and, I hope, forwarded the object the directors have in view—to establish a school of art in connection with their Institution.

"When I look back only a few years, and recollect how little this question was understood amongst our large and intelligent communities, it is a cheering prospect to find its influences extending to such communities as this.

"I might allude to the effect produced here by the Great Exhibition of 1851. Suffice it to say that its influences have not yet died away, but will descend to a future generation. It was visited by a large mass of the people, and is, and will long remain, a pleasing theme of conversation.

"If, without infringing your rules on these occasions, I may be allowed to trace out what I conceive to be the requirements for the future, it would be to suggest that a mistake still attaches to all our efforts; that we are endeavouring to carry our system of instruction to a point that wearies the great mass of industrial artisans; they do not desire to become expert draughtsmen or beautiful manipulators,—they seek to gain a knowledge of the principles which govern the combinations of lines which produce certain and definite results denominated styles. This might be done with less sacrifice of time and labour to themselves, and render them more efficient aids in the progress and development of art. It is the alphabet they seek first to learn, and then its grammar and syntax of form. These principles would enable them to mould the clay, shape the wood, or chase the metal, with intelligence, independent of the accurate manipulation required to perfect the character and maintain the position of the professed industrial artists.

"I have endeavoured hastily to give you the result of my experience in support of the paper to be read. I think there exists an extended spirit of inquiry in the public mind, which seeks and avails itself of every opportunity of satisfying the desire to become acquainted with the principles and applications of the theory of art, which, if fostered by extended means of information, will speedily remove the complaint of neglect of art which is now associated with the national character—at least it is so in this district. If these views should meet the concurrence of your Society, and lead to the discussion of the important question of future progress and development of the national and social importance of industrial art, I shall be glad."

MR. JOHN LEIGHTON (F.S.A.) says:—

"I am sorry that I cannot attend to hear Mr. Wallis's remarks upon the "Progress of Design," but can, for all that, bear testimony to the general soundness of his views in reporting upon the American Exhibition, and his valuable notes upon the French Exposition of 1855, its virtues and its vices, for none know either better than the head-master of the important Art School at Birmingham.

"To instil great art into little things is what we want in England, to rear an army of educated workers from the highest to the lowest, and a public to encourage and

appreciate the beautiful and true at sight; a common-wealth of art complete in all its branches, in which every one should aspire to be the first of *his* class rather than of the first class; how much greater is a Cellini with the powers of an Angelo than a would-be Angelo without the power to be even Cellini's drudge. Here small men in art aspire to great things, whilst the great ones eschew many things little, for fear of being thought small, forgetting that to great minds nothing is little. There is a great want of art in small things; go where you will about our metropolis and see how much pains are taken to render beautiful things ugly, and all for the want of a firm base—a broad base—art education upon sound principles disseminated amongst the people; once educate thoroughly the people to appreciate harmony of colour and purity of form, and it will become a part of their nature, and remain to after generations as if by instinct.

"How great an evidence of this have we in the display in the shop windows of Paris—where many of the dressers of the shop windows not only educate their fellow tradesmen but also the public,—a thing said by many to arise from an innate physical aptitude to appreciate the subtleties of art—a thing that I deny; it may have been the growth of years to instil, but once imbibed it becomes a part of the national character. I remember an instance of this in the French Exhibition, where many British goods, fine in themselves, were rendered repulsive for the want of tasteful arrangement; it was in the case of the representative of one of our great hives of industry, who could not for the life of him get his goods into harmonious order until the close of the Exposition; whilst his neighbour, with the same materials and an intelligent French agent, had his show one harmonious whole from the first day. What is the moral? Why, had this representative of one of our great manufacturing towns but devoted one day in his youth to study a few facts connected with the laws of colouring, it would not have deserted him in his need. Our painters are colourists, but they have not learned it from the people. Abroad the people have a lively appreciation of colour, that cannot be learned from their painters."

Mr. JOSEPH LOCKETT, of Strangeways Engraving Works, Manchester, says:—

"I am obliged for the opportunity of perusing the paper of Mr. Wallis on "Recent Progress in Design, as applied to Manufactures," and avail myself of your permission to offer a few remarks upon it. Being largely engaged in the engraving of designs for muslin, calico, de laine, &c., printing more than four thousand designs passing through our hands annually—representing the taste, or rather the character, of the productions of the principal houses engaged in the print trade of this country, and of the continent of Europe, the result of my observations may probably not be uninteresting, and are quite at your service.

"Mr. Wallis has stated, and correctly, that the will and taste of the manufacturer exercises, in many instances, very little influence over the production of the designs on which he operates, and that he is guided simply by the demand. This is still more correct as regards the foreign trade. The merchant receives instructions from his correspondent to procure certain classes and styles of goods for markets where, probably, the notions of beauty differ widely from our own; and the order is frequently accompanied by a rude and almost impracticable drawing, made by a 'native' artist, which the manufacturer has to adapt in such manner as to retain, as far as possible, the features of the original. In fact, every market of the world demands a special variety. These facts may serve to point out the origin and history of the 'ugly' patterns referred to by Mr. Wallis, on which the artisan is sometimes required to operate unwillingly, and consequently not with his wonted skill. As regards the production of designs for the home trade, we must look at home for the responsibility of producing such as are offensive to artistic taste; but here again the

manufacturer is not the only one in fault. The wholesale purchaser, believing that he knows best 'what will sell,' in many instances employs his own designer, or selects, or 'gets up,' his own patterns, which the printer willingly produces, provided the quantity ordered and the price meet his wishes, in which case no pattern is ever regarded by him as 'ugly.'

"It is quite true that a great many patterns appear to be composed, as Mr. Wallis states, of 'shreds and patches, heterogeneously hurled together;' but on closer examination he would probably discover that the materials are methodically arranged for a distinct purpose, and with the view to produce a certain characteristic effect. Although such patterns are strictly artistic, yet unless the disposition of the colours and of the details be judiciously made, and the general result be suitable for the purpose desired, the pattern would be unsuccessful. It often occurs that an artist is very successful in combining patterns from materials presented to him, but who cannot originate; yet he must not be denied his fair share of merit. It is a distinct talent, and is frequently available for purposes which those who have higher talents could not perform as well.

"The demand for printed fabrics may be divided into two classes—one, where cheapness and utility are the principal desideratum. If the material be good and durable, and the pattern cover the cloth suitably; if it will not easily 'show dirt,' and the colours 'will wash,' the design is often, in reality, of minor importance; in which case the manufacturer frequently avails himself of 'mixtures and patterns from old pattern-books,' in which he is fully justified, inasmuch as he is enabled thereby to produce cheaply. Where the consumer of more refined taste has to be satisfied, a wider range for the talents of the designer is presented, and then the deficiency of the English artist becomes apparent. I am ready to admit that English designers have made considerable progress; but the French designers have also advanced, and the distance betwixt them is not diminished, and the greater part of the better class of designs 'brought out' by English manufacturers are of their production. The English designers belong to a less educated and less refined class than the French, who are carefully trained, in the first place, to the art of drawing, which acquirement they are afterwards taught to apply practically to the art of designing for industrial purposes, in the ateliers of skilful artists, and out of them they have the advantages of being surrounded continually by objects of elegance and refinement. The art of designing in France is looked upon as one which entitles the artist to a respectable position in society, and is correspondingly remunerated; hence a better educated class of youths is brought up to it than in England, where the art is not looked upon as of so much importance. Unless these conditions could be changed, the English designer is not likely to supersede the necessity of employing French talent where elegance and refined taste have to be catered for. An improved taste amongst the better class of consumers has already created an increased demand for superior productions, and the manufacturers find means to supply it; in the meantime, they will go on perpetrating artistic absurdities in design, so long as the majority of consumers, at home and abroad, do not appreciate and demand better.

"That the taste of the consumer may be influenced and elevated by familiarising him with a higher class of productions, is evidenced by the fact, that the calico printer was, in former times, compelled to produce distinct varieties of patterns for almost every country. Even Ireland had her own notions of beauty gratified by designs specially made for her. America required a distinct variety. Germany demanded a class of pattern totally different to either. At the present day, taste is so extensively assimilated to that of Paris and London, that the higher classes of English and French goods find ready sale, to a considerable extent, in almost every civilized part of the world.

"The world-wide celebrity of the 'willow pattern' in crockery, referred to by Mr. Wallis, is another instance of demand, where usefulness and economy are the principal considerations. The wares are well covered by the pattern, and in case of breakages there is no difficulty whatever in replacing them. The 'willow pattern' is to be found almost everywhere, whereas more elegant designs are often difficult, if not altogether impracticable, to replace, or they might require to be made expressly, if the manufacturer can be found, at extra cost and considerable inconvenience. I feel persuaded that the 'willow pattern' is seldom, if ever, bought for the beauty of the design; it is preferred only for its usefulness and convenience; therefore the extensive demand for it ought not to be taken as a proof of deficient taste in the public, no more than the preponderating sale of inferior productions in printed fabrics should be taken as indicating the condition of artistic taste with reference to calico, &c., printing."

Mr. GEORGE STEWART (of the School of Art, Macclesfield), says:—"I regret to say that it is not possible for me to be present at the reading of Mr. Wallis's interesting paper on 'Progress in Design,' and I feel deeply the compliment you have paid me of offering to take into consideration any remarks I may have to make on the subject. I should scarcely presume to do so, unless as an ally of Mr. Wallis's in his crusade against ugliness, when I may possibly support a small point that might escape the notice of more able warriors."

"As far as my experience extends over the manufactures of this locality, it enables me to bear testimony to the perfect correctness of Mr. Wallis's statement, that a steady and uniform improvement characterises them; and it is my impression that to sustain and increase this progress, but very slight alterations are required in the machinery hitherto employed in its development. One of the main points of change which may be made conducive to the improvements we desire, and which claims immediate attention as a necessity, appears to me to be the giving to manufacturers a clear definition of the critics' 'beau ideal' of manufactured excellence; for at present the manufacturers seem to be under some misapprehension as to the exact point to which we would lead them, as to the precise nature of the improvements required of them. It is customary in our criticisms to characterise improvements as something 'conventional,' severe, precise, symmetrical, geometric; these terms appear in opposition to florid and natural treatment of ornamentation. This language is, perhaps, too technical for general comprehension. Manufacturers unacquainted with the principles upon which it is founded, often connect such commendations with everything that is formal and stiff, repulsive and heavy; in fact, all that is not evidently natural, is supposed to agree with our requirements. The consequences are, that designers and manufacturers, under a momentary pressure of the new theories, concoct together some grotesque combination of architectural forms, as an experiment upon the market; which, naturally failing, they return with renewed avidity to their former styles, and become the most determined opponents to theories which appear to be of so impracticable a character. But let a manufacturer be shown, by good illustrations, that ornamentation may be severe and precise, yet beautiful—symmetrical, yet free; geometric, yet as sparkling as any arrangement of forms treated naturally; and, at the same time, show him the perfect consistency of principle upon which such a system of decoration is based, and he will be, doubtless, much more courageous in the introduction of the innovations we require."

"But let us still further increase this feeling by making use of our existing institutions—our schools of art—as consulting institutions for the designer and manufacturer, when beset with any difficulties as to the fitness of any decoration for its purpose. The manufacturer might thus be indirectly led towards improvement, and a union

of interest created between the workshop and the school, which could not but be advantageous to both."

"Having by this means prepared the manufacturer to undertake the production of articles of a new caste, it may next be advisable to consider how far an art influence can be extended over classes who may still place themselves in opposition to the new movement. Such are the commercial agents or buyers, who are said to dictate to the producers what they shall provide, and to the purchasers what they shall consume. Hitherto an art influence has been dependent upon a direct action. The artisan and manufacturer, the representatives of executive skill, have alone engaged the attention of art educators. But the general buyer, or agent, the representative of selective skill, holding a far more commanding position, requires a guiding influence still more than the two classes mentioned. But this influence can only be conveyed in an indirect manner, which might possibly be effected by the dissemination amongst them of authoritative works on art manufacture, of comprehensive works of reference, as, for instance, Chevreul's 'On Colour,' which (to my knowledge) is taken by manufacturers and others as a hand-book of daily reference, as an authority, upon all points connected with the arrangement of colour in manufactured goods. Such a fact seems to point out that a similar authoritative work on form, and quantity of form, is simply required to complete our circle of influence, and to relieve a class from an unprofitable position of indecision or indifference."

"It would only remain then to consider what improvements could be introduced in the conveyance of direct influence in the education of the manufacturer and the artisan in our schools of art. But this point may be very properly left to the consideration of the existing authorities."

Proceedings of Institutions.

CHELTENHAM.—In addition to the usual courses of lectures delivered at the Literary and Philosophical Institution, there have been two courses (one of which is now in progress) delivered to the working classes at the Town-hall. They have included familiar explanations of scientific subjects; the biography of the self-educated; and the character, position, claims, and duties of the working classes themselves; and they have been well attended, and listened to with intelligence and attention. Amongst the lecturers are E. R. Humphreys, LL.D., and Mr. Scougall, of the Endowed Grammar School; T. Wright, M.D., F.R.S.E.; Dr. Lankester; the Rev. Morton Brown, LL.D., and the Rev. C. H. Bromby, Principal of the Training College.

TUNBRIDGE.—On Friday, February 1st, a lecture was delivered in the Town-hall to the members and friends of the Literary and Scientific Institution, by Mr. George Dawson, on the "Life and Times of George Fox, the Founder of the Society of Friends." The lecture was attentively listened to by a numerous and respectable company, who appeared highly gratified by Mr. Dawson's masterly description of this remarkable man, and the eventful time in which he lived. At the close of the lecture a vote of thanks was given to Mr. Dawson. This Institution continues to make steady progress. Several new members have joined the Society this year. A large supply of new books has been received, and a series of lectures, &c., organised for the spring months.

WATERFORD.—A general meeting of the friends and subscribers of the Mechanics' Institute was held on Friday night, Doctor John Mackesy in the chair. Mr. J. G. Davis (Sec.) read the report of the committee for the past year, giving a most cheering account of the greatly improved working of the Institute. Mr. Davis then read the financial report, after which the adoption, printing, and circulating of both reports was moved by Mr. James

Dobbyn, seconded by Mr. Owen Power, and passed. The CHAIRMAN observed, that in the accounts just read there was an item not entered in them, as it properly belonged to the incoming year's account, and that was the profits of the panorama, which amounted to £117. A portion of that had been paid for building purposes, to the Messrs. McClelland, in the Institution, and the remainder was to its credit. He (the chairman) hoped the meeting would not separate without coming to a resolution voting a portion of that money to Mr. Davis, for his valuable exertions on behalf of the Institute. Mr. DAVIS could not think, for one moment, of accepting any portion of this money. The CHAIRMAN then recommended that it be an instruction from the meeting to the sub-committee to increase the salary of Mr. Davis. Wm. M. ARDAGH, Esq., J.P., bore testimony to the great efficiency of Mr. Davis in carrying on the Institute. At a subsequent portion of the proceedings Mr. Ardagh moved a resolution, which was seconded and passed unanimously, that Mr. Davis' salary be increased. Mr. M'LAUGHLIN (National School Inspector) moved the next resolution, which was the appointment of the following vice-presidents for the ensuing year:—The Dean of Waterford, Rev. J. Crotty, R. Keating, Esq., M.P., John Mackesy, Esq., M.D., William R. Ardagh, J.P., and James Palmer Graves, Esq. In proposing this resolution Mr. M'Laughlin remarked, that there was in the Institution every means of diffusing education among the youth of the city, and he believed that, previous to the establishment of the schools of the Institute, those means were of a contracted kind. He would suggest that half-yearly examinations be established, which would be found to be attended with the best consequences. The resolution, having been seconded by Mr. Clarke, was passed. Votes of thanks were then passed to the outgoing committee, to the treasurer, the donors to the library, and to the chairman.

MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING WEEK.

- MON.** London Inst., 7, Dr. Lankester, "On the Recent Progress of Vegetable Physiology."
Chemical, 8.
Statistical, 8, Mr. Charles Jellicoe, "The Bank of England; its Present Constitution and Operations."
- TUES.** Royal Inst., 3.
Civil Engineers, 8, Mr. W. Heinke, "On Diving Dresses and other Apparatus for Working under Water."
Linnaean, 8.
Pathological, 8.
- WED.** Society of Arts, 8, Mr. Maxwell T. Masters, "On the Principles regulating the Transfer of Useful Plants of one Country to Another."
Geological, 8, 1. Professor Harkness, "On the Age of some of the Sandstones and Breccias of the South of Scotland;" 2. Mr. Laurent, "On the Borings in the Valenciennes Coal Field;" 3. Rev. Mr. Dennis, "On some supposed Mammalian Remains from the Base of the Lias."
- THURS.** Royal Inst., 3.
SAT. London Inst., 3, Mr. E. W. Brayley, "On Geology."
Royal Botanic, 3.
Medical, 8.

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS.

SESSIONAL PRINTED PAPERS.

Delivered on 1st and 3rd March, 1856.

- Par. No.**
70. Incumbered Estates Court, &c. (Ireland)—Return.
72. Newspaper Stamps—Return.
73. Committee of Selection—2nd Report.
55. Bills—Married Women's Reversionary Interest.
58. Bills—Metropolis Local Management Act Amendment.
60. Bills—Out-Pensioners (Greenwich and Chelsea).
Delivered on 4th March, 1856.
64. Wheat, &c.—Return.
65. Bills—Oath of Abdication.
49. Bills—Drafts on Bankers.
59. Bills—Factories.
Delivered on 5th March, 1856.
41. Local Acts (8, Vale of Clwyd Railway; 9, Forest of Dean Central Railway; 10, London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway; 11, Thames Haven Dock and Railway; 12, Milford Junction Railway; 13, Westminster Terminus Railway)—Admiralty Reports.

73. Constabulary Police—Copy of Rules and Regulations.
76. "Josephine Willis" and the "Mangerton"—Copies of Reports.
St. Pancras Workhouse Accommodation—Report.
Turnpike Trusts (Scotland)—Abstract Statements of Income and Expenditure.

Delivered on 6th March, 1856.

68. Digest of Poor Laws—Copy of Correspondence.
69. Russia Company—Copy of Memorial to the Board of Trade.
54. Bill—Bankruptcy (Scotland).
Kars (Defence and Capitulation).
Public General Acts—Cap. 1 and 2.

Delivered on 7th March, 1856.

44. Army Promotions—Return.
80. Chelsea Royal Military Asylum—Return.
64. Bills—Bleaching, &c., Works.
65. Bills—Wychwood Forest.
India Law Commissions—First and Second Reports.

Delivered on 8th and 10th March, 1856.

3. Duchy of Cornwall—Account.
59. Works and Public Buildings—Abstract Accounts.
77. Joint Stock Companies—Report by the Registrar.
81. Military Savings Banks—Accounts.
86. Assaults on Women and Children—Return.
66. Bill—Railway and Canal Traffic.
40. Bill—Minister's Money (Ireland).
Department of Science and Art—Order in Council.
Births, Deaths, and Marriages (Scotland)—1st Annual Report of the Registrar General.

Delivered on 11th March, 1856.

84. Paupers—Returns.
67. Bill—Vaccination.

Delivered on 12th March, 1856.

41. Local Acts (14, Lymington Railway; 15, Maybole and Girvan Railway; 16, Isle of Wight Steam-Bridge and Approaches)—Admiralty Reports.
83. Railway and Canal Bills Committee—First Report.
90. Civil Services Estimates—Class 2.
93. Railway and Canal Bills—Report of the Board of Trade.
Agricultural Statistics, Ireland—Tables.
Public General Acts—Cap. 3, 4, 5, and 6.

PATENT LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1852.

APPLICATIONS FOR PATENTS AND PROTECTION ALLOWED.

[From Gazette March 7th, 1856.]

Dated 1st December, 1855.

2711. Sir Charles Edward Grey, 38, Rue du Mont Thabor, Paris—The use of a new vegetable material for raising the nap and dressing woollen cloths and webs and tissues.

Dated 11th January, 1856.

87. William Smith, Little Woolstone—Improvements in ploughs, and other cultivating implements.

Dated 16th January, 1856.

111. Thomas Dunn, Windsor Bridge Iron Works, Pendleton—Improvements in boilers and apparatus for heating water and generating steam.

Dated 25th January, 1856.

205. Gentle Brown, Swinton, near Kotherham—Improvement in the manufacture of cast steel.

Dated 9th February, 1856.

343. John Elce and Samuel Fletcher Cottam, Manchester—Improved mode of lubricating the spindles of machinery used in preparing and spinning cotton and other fibrous materials revolving in a lifting rail.

349. Theodule Cavé, Paris—Improvements in oil lamps, which he calls the "Continual Lamp."

Dated 11th February, 1856.

353. William Henry Zahn, New York, and Joseph Henry George Wells, 3, Ebenezer-place, Neckinger-road, Bermondsey—Improvements in wind mills or wind engines.

355. Thomas Steven, Milton Foundry, Glasgow—Improvements in the construction of open and close stoves, which improvements are applicable in part to kitchen ranges and boiler fire-places.

Dated 12th February, 1856.

357. Joseph Marie Guidicelli, 34, Rue Bonaparte, Paris—Improvements in the transformation of movement in steam-engines and other machinery.

359. Richard Archibald Brooman, 166, Fleet-street—Improvements in the manufacture of cast steel. (A communication.)

Dated 13th February, 1856.

361. Frederick Steiner, Accrington—Improvements in machinery to be used in drying fabrics.

365. William Frederick Collard Moutrie, 4, King-street, Holborn—Improvement in the damper action of piano-fortes.

367. Richard Knight, Foster-lane—Improvements in medical chests.

369. William Edward Newton, 66, Chancery lane—Improvements in the manufacture of zinc. (A communication.)

371. Alfred Vincent Newton, 66, Chancery-lane—Improvements in springs applicable to railroad carriages, and to other uses. (A communication.)

373. John Barber, Manchester—Improvements in steam-engines.

375. William Parsons, 33, High street, Pimlico—Improvements in spindles for locks and latches.

Dated 14th February, 1856.

379. Stephen Rossin Parkhurst, New York—Improvements in sails and rigging for vessels.
380. Walter McFarlane, Glasgow—Improvements in building and structural works, and fittings in metal.
381. John Emsley, Bolton-road, Bradford—Improvements in tube spinning frames employed in spinning worsted-yarn and other fibrous substances.
383. John Taylor, Spring-grove, Hounslow—Improvement in constructing and facing walls.
385. Edmund Morewood and George Rogers, Enfield—Improvements in drying and coating iron and copper.
386. William Watson Hewitson, Headingley, near Leeds—Improvement in casting the bearings or brasses of machinery.
387. Thomas Evans Blackwell, Clifton, near Bristol—Improvements in condensing steam, and in cooling and heating fluids.
389. George Gulliver and John Goldthorpe, Barnsley—Improved signal bell.

Dated 20th February, 1856.

424. Richard Laming, Carlton-villas, Maida-vale—Improvements in purifying gas, in preparing materials useful for purifying gas, and in apparatus to be used in purifying gas and disinfecting gas liquors or washings.
426. William Muir, Britannia Works, Manchester—Improvements in slide lathes.
428. William Lynn, H.M. Dockyard, Portsmouth—Improvements in the construction and mode of applying screws for propelling vessels.
430. Richard Archibald Brooman, 166, Fleet-street—Improvements in working railway switches and crossings, and certain indicating apparatus for preventing accidents on railways. (A communication.)
432. William Clibran and Joseph Clibran, Manchester—Improvements in and applicable to apparatus or mechanism for measuring and regulating the flow of gas, and in the mode of constructing parts thereof.
434. John Henry Johnson, 47, Lincoln's-inn-fields—Improvements in machinery or apparatus for lubricating bearings, parts of which improvements are applicable to the raising or elevating of liquids. (A communication.)

Dated 21st February, 1856.

440. Isaac Moll, Cologne—The treatment of sulphate of alumine of commerce, and its formation of compounds useful for the disinfecting of organic substances in a state of putrefaction, as well as for other purposes.
442. Jacques Henri Marie Maisiat, Paris—Improvements in projectiles for fire-arms.
444. Thomas Bennett and Wilfred Preston Dugdale, Farnworth—Improvements in flyers used in spinning machinery.
446. Frederick Enthoven, Moorgate street—Improved cover for gunpowder and other canisters and vessels. (A communication.)
448. William Clarke, Nottingham—Improvements in the manufacture of warp fabrics.

Dated 22nd February, 1856.

452. John Sharp Cromatote Heywood, Battle-bridge, and George Lloyd, Great Gullford-street, Southwark—Improvements in condensing vapours in distillatory operations, the manufacture of varnishes, melting and distilling of fats, and other manufacturing or chemical operations, and obtaining useful products therefrom.
454. John Kingsford Field, Lambeth, and Charles Humfrey, 14, The Terrace, Camberwell—Improvements in the manufacture of paraffine candles.
456. James Griffiths, Wolverhampton—Improved brake for colliery and other steam-engines.

Dated 23rd February, 1856.

460. Edward Schischkar, Halifax—Improvements in cleansing silk, hair, wool, yarn, and textile fabrics.
464. George Holme Spencer, Heathersage, near Sheffield—Improvements in the manufacture of card surfaces employed in carding cotton and wool.
466. Thomas Goode Messenger, Loughboro'—Improvements in boilers.
468. Joseph Scudamore, Mitcheldean, Gloucester—Improvement in domestic stoves or grates.
470. Henry Loveridge, Wolverhampton—Improvement in feet, hip, and slipper baths, also in bases for shower baths and basins for washing, and other purposes.
472. Samuel Rodgers Samuels, Nottingham—Improvements in weaving fabrics.
- Dated 25th February, 1856.*
474. Louis Normanby, 67, Judd-street, Brunswick-square—Improvements in the mode of constructing and fixing the rail of railways. (A communication.)
476. Frederick Kersey, 5, Lurie terrace, St. George's-road, Southwark—Improvement in the manufacture of drain pipes.

478. Robert Hawthorn and William Hawthorn, Newcastle-upon-Tyne—Improved arrangement of steam pump.

480. Charles Frederick Claus, Latchford, Chester—Improvements in metal shipbuilding, applicable also to steam-boilers, bridges, and other structures in which metal plates are used.
482. Charles Damas Auguste Joseph Planque, Pont St. Maxence, France—Improvements in the manufacture of fecula.
484. Edward Slaughter, Avonside Ironworks, Bristol—Improvements in the fire-boxes of locomotive and other steam boilers.

Dated 26th February, 1856.

486. James Prescott Joule, F.R.S., Manchester—Improvements in steam-engines.
490. James Steedman, Albany-street—Improvement in piano-fortes.
492. Philip Schafer and Frederick Schafer, Brewer-street—Improved apparatus for damping gummed stamps, tickets, labels, and envelopes.
494. Richard Archibald Brooman, 166, Fleet-street—Compositions to be used as a substitute for hops in brewing. (A communication.)
496. Isaac Reckitt, George Reckitt, and Francis Reckitt, Kingston-upon-Hull—Improvements in the manufacture of starch, British gum, and size.

Dated 27th February, 1856.

498. Gabriel Marie Legrand, 57, Rue de Bretagne, Paris—Improvements in graining and chequering skins and woven tissues.
500. John Henry Johnson, 47, Lincoln's-inn-fields—Improvements in the treatment of hard india rubber for the purpose of rendering the same applicable to the manufacture of pens, tubes, springs, and other similar articles. (A communication.)
502. William Exall, Reading—Improvements in the manufacture and arrangement of sawing machinery.
504. Alexander Inglis, New River Head, Clerkenwell—Improvement in the manufacture of flexible bottles or cases for containing colours and other fluids and semi-fluids.

WEEKLY LIST OF PATENTS SEALED.

Sealed March 7th, 1856.

2023. Florentin Garand.
2031. Eugene Hippolyte Rascol.
2033. Joseph Henry Tuck.
2106. Richard Archibald Brooman.
2113. George Arthur Biddell.
2505. William Johnson.
2821. John Henry Johnson.
2879. James Fleming, junr.
160. John Wordsworth Robson.

Sealed March 11th, 1856.

2082. Joseph Partridge and John Kirkham.
2067. Pierre Bernardet de Lucenay.
2070. Joseph Henry Tuck.
2071. Abram Longbottom.
2074. William Church.
2075. Théodore Gomme, junr., and Charles Eugene Auguste Beaugrand.
2082. Joseph Gilbert Martien.
2090. Alfred Ford.
2092. Joseph Lewtas.
2114. Samuel Coulson.
2122. John Dale.
2123. George Seaborn Parkinson.
2142. Frederic Rainford Ensor.
2291. John Deurance.
2822. George Hall Nicoll.
2856. Andrew Small.
32. William Simmons.
170. Dundas Smith Porteous.

PATENTS ON WHICH THE THIRD YEAR'S STAMP DUTY HAS BEEN PAID.

March 1st.

5646. Joseph Maudslay.

March 3rd.

1026. William Frederick Thomas.

March 4th.

651. Charles Heard Wild.

March 5th.

608. John Powis and Jabus Stanley James.

March 6th.

621. William Muir.

657. John Livesey.

March 7th.

601. George Collier.

March 8th.

612. The Honourable William Erskine Cochrane and William Marshall Cochrane.

WEEKLY LIST OF DESIGNS FOR ARTICLES OF UTILITY REGISTERED.

No. in the Register.	Date of Registration.	Title.	Proprietors' Name.	Address.
3816	March 11.	Improved Shirt Neck Band or Collar	James Flanagan	Manchester.
3817	March 12.	{ A Stove or Furnace for Heating Hat- ters' Irons	John Clayton	Denton, near Manchester.